

## A Russian Traveler's Impressions of Hawaii and Tahiti, 1859-1860

A translation of A. V. Vysheslavitsev, *Ocherki perom i karandashom iz krugosvetnogo plavaniya v 1857, 1858, 1859 i 1860 godakh* [Sketches in Pen and Pencil from a Voyage around the World in the Years 1857, 1858, 1859, and 1860] (St. Petersburg: Ministry of the Navy, 1862), chapter 7.

Ella L. Wiswell

### TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

This is a translation from the Russian of the sections on Hawaii and Tahiti in the book *Sketches in Pen and Pencil from a Voyage around the World in 1857, 1858, 1859 and 1860* by Aleksei Vladimirovich Vysheslavitsev (1831-1888). The book was published in a beautiful edition by the Russian Ministry of the Navy in 1862 with 23 illustrations by the author. It was issued again in an equally attractive edition in 1867 by the Wolf Publishing Company in St. Petersburg.

The 592-page book consists of nine chapters and describes the voyage of the Navy clipper *Plastun* from Cherbourg to Madeira, Tenerife, Ascension, around the Cape of Good Hope, across the Indian Ocean, through Java to Singapore, then on to Hong Kong, Canton, Formosa, Manchuria, and the Russian Pacific Far East. From there the voyage continued to Japan where the *Plastun* spent nearly a year as part of the Russian squadron accompanying Admiral Muraviev-Amursky who was negotiating a treaty with the Japanese. Subsequently the *Plastun* continued on around the world stopping at Hawaii and Tahiti. In Montevideo the *Plastun* had to undergo some repairs, and the author was transferred to the corvette *Novik* which was also returning from Japan. The transfer saved Vysheslavitsev's life because the *Plastun* was sunk by an explosion just as the two ships were approaching the home port of Kronshatdt in Russia. Only nine members of the 79-member crew were rescued. The cause of the explosion was never determined, but it was suspected that a fire was started by a sailor resentful of ill treatment by the commanding officer. The final page in the book describes the disaster,

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The Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. 17 (1983)

and the last drawing depicts the *Plastun* engulfed in flames. The survivors were rescued by the *Novik* crew.

While all of Vysheslavtsev's observations are interesting, the section on Japan is particularly significant historically because it was the first time the Russians were permitted to enter the capital following the opening of Japan in 1853. However, his visit to Honolulu and Tahiti drew the most attention in the contemporary Russian press. When the book was first published it was enthusiastically received by Russian critics because it was one of the few literary descriptions of a voyage in Russian. The author was praised for his drawings and for his literary style, and the book was invariably compared to Goncharov's *The Voyage of the Frigate Pallada* (1856). Goncharov's book, written after he served as secretary to Admiral Putiatin during the 1853 Russian expedition to Japan, set the pattern for literary accounts of voyages.

Vysheslavtsev was not a professional navy man. He was a doctor of medicine by profession and a writer and artist by avocation. After graduating from the Moscow School of Medicine at age 20 he enlisted as a doctor with the army and took part in the Crimean War (1853-56). His first literary efforts appeared as articles in popular publications during that period. The titles were: "Sixth of June in Sebastopol", "30th of August in Sebastopol" and "A Day on Malakhov Hill".

In 1858 Vysheslavtsev was transferred to the Baltic Fleet and sailed on the *Plastun*. *Sketches in Pen and Pencil* appeared after his return and made him famous as a writer. At the completion of the voyage Vysheslavtsev was appointed by the government to serve as an arbitrator during the liberation of the serfs in 1861 in his native province of Tambovsk. In 1863 he was appointed to head a government office and served in various localities until 1876, when he retired for reasons of health and settled in the village of Volkhonshchino in the province of Tambovsk. However, his ill health did not prevent him from continuing with his art studies and writing. He traveled in Greece, Italy and Turkey. As a result of his publications in the field of art history he was made an honorary member of the Academy of Arts. His writings included *Virgin and Infant by Donatello*, *Among Temples and Ruins*, *Giotto and the Giottists*, *Italian Art in the XV century*, and *Umbrio and the Art of Northern Italy*. He also continued his own art work. Just before his death in 1888 he was designing icons for a new church and working on a three-volume biography of Raphael, parts of which appeared in the Russian periodical "Russki Vestnik" (Russian Herald). The book, *Complete Biography of Raphael*, was published posthumously.

*Sketches in Pen and Pencil* was issued in limited editions and became

a rarity. Recently both editions of this rare book were acquired in Honolulu, one by the University of Hawaii and the other by the Bishop Museum, prompting this translation. Apparently the book has never been translated into English, although a description of it and some short excerpts from the chapter on Hawaii and Tahiti appeared in the Sunday issue of the San Francisco Examiner for November 27, 1927. The article, by Nadia Lavrova, was occasioned by the fact that a copy of the book had been brought to San Francisco. Lavrova wrote:

I have been assured that the book is a rarity in Russia as only a limited number of copies were published. Soon after publication Grand Duke Constantine Nicholaevich, uncle of the late emperor, and owner of one of the best private libraries in Russia, acquired several copies. Upon the grand duke's death in 1897, the library, according to his will, was apportioned among various military schools in Russia. A part of it was sent to the military school at Habarovsk, in Siberia, where it fell to the lot of General Baron Aleksei de Boodberg to sort the books out and catalogue them. As a reward for his labor he was offered duplicate volumes. When the general came to San Francisco some years ago, he brought the cherished book with him.

In this translation the author's original notes, marked by asterisks, are retained in the text. The translator's notes are indicated by numbers and are placed at the end of the text. Because of the author's impressionistic and rather romantic approach, some of his presentation of historical background is sketchy and occasionally inaccurate. In the interest of brevity only the more obvious errors have been footnoted.

*Sketches in Pen and Pencil from a Voyage around the World  
in the years 1857, 1858, 1859 and 1860*

by A. V. Vysheslavitsev  
Chapter 7 (pp. 364-454)

THE PACIFIC OCEAN

- I. The Sandwich Islands—Horse latitudes—Diamond Head and Punch Bowl—Reefs—Missionaries—Honolulu—Kanakas—Honolulu Society—Funeral—Militia—Execution—Waikiki—Ewa Plain—Pali—Hula-hula—Kamehameha IV.
- II. Tahiti—Impressions of the island—Pomare—Papeete—Breadfruit tree—Schools—Poea—Splendor of tropical growth—Papeari—A hut and girl singers—Papara—Fataua—A ball at the Hôtel de Ville—Hupa-hupa—Queen Pomare—Eimeo—The Papetuoi Bay—Once more in Tahiti.

## I. HAWAII

I am writing this in a small house to which I moved in order to get a respite from life at sea. The entire house consists of one room; outside it is concealed by trees, while breezes blowing through the constantly open doors bring in the freshness of foliage and the fragrance of flowers that grow nearby. One of the doors is guarded by two huge bushes of daturas, the white flowers of which awaken in the moonlight and send their aromatic breath in my direction. Some pretty little lilac flowers peak through the other door. A sudden breeze will start the rustle of the light acacia and tamarind leaves and a murmur among the heavy coconut palm fronds above the neighboring fence.

We left Hakodate for the last time with an entirely different feeling: we were proceeding home and were leaving it probably for ever. And it was not just Hakodate that we left behind; for beyond it, lost in its eternal fogs, was the Manchurian coast with its deserted bays and landings, with tundra, pine woods, dogs, deer, and Giliaks.<sup>1</sup> Ahead, the horizon seemed to be clearing, and on the clear strip of the lighted sky one's imagination obligingly drew pictures of palms and banana trees in the magic islands, their beautiful inhabitants gathered at the door of their huts surrounded by the romantic atmosphere of patriarchal life. Beyond them even brighter pictures appeared: the native steppe, the sound of the Russian sleigh bell, cherished oaks peeking from behind a hill, joyful greetings, and the feeling of a task completed. Even though at least another ten more months of sailing separated us from all that, every hour, every mile made the distance shorter and shorter, and probably not a single novelty encountered in our travels will have produced the same effect as the impression that will be produced by the Kronshtadt light when our navigators will spot it at last and self importantly "note its bearing."

I cannot deny that a certain amount of sadness was intermingled with our rejoicing over the homeward journey; we had spent almost a year in Hakodate; in Hakodate we left our comrades who waved their handkerchiefs in a farewell sign from their clipper ship as we pulled out; there was not a spot around the bay that did not remind us of something; we had had time to become accustomed to the place, to get settled, and a Russian is always reluctant to leave a spot where he is well settled, a warm spot. And finally, who knows what the future holds? A lot of water runs under the bridge in the course of a year, and how much water will we see coming over our clipper when we round Cape Horn, that *bête noire* of seafarers! (Any American who has rounded Cape Horn



gains the privilege of putting his feet on the table.) For over a year we will not receive any letters. What awaits us at home?

But all these regrets and forebodings did not in the least spoil the general euphoria. Those who still remembered Schiller kept repeating one of his verses that ends in the following lines:

Sind die Schiffe ruckgekehrt  
Zu der lieben Heimath wieder<sup>2</sup>

and the feeling of happiness prevailed.

We raised anchor on November 3rd [1859] at dawn, but shortly after had to drop it again at the entrance to Tzugaru Strait. A storm was raging at sea, the agitated ocean drove the infuriated waves through the Strait, while the wind hit us head on with strong gusts. We waited a day in the lee of a mountain. Rain fell all day; occasionally it would clear up and we would glimpse for the last time the melancholy Hakodate landscape, the three masts of the *Dzshigit* barely visible from behind the fort, and the cave opposite which we were anchored. This cave is one of the remarkable landmarks in the vicinity of Hakodate. We went to inspect it several times in the course of the winter. It was necessary to attach a long rope at the entrance and then enter the cave in small boats. A long tunnel, formed by overhanging stalactites, leads into a spacious high vaulted hall containing several granite blocks in the middle; water smashes the rocky walls with fury, and the noise, increased tenfold by the echo, terrifies all newcomers. We carried torches and flares. Their wavering flames lighted up the scattered rocks, the black crevices in the enormous vault, the splashing waves, and our scurrying figures. The boat could have been smashed very easily. Once we went into the cave in a small Japanese boat. It was pushed against the rocks several times and was almost shattered.

On November 4th, in the morning, we sailed out of the Strait, and speeding under a favorable wind at about ten miles an hour, soon lost Japan out of sight. From the nautical point of view our passage was very unsettling. When we expected a W wind we had an E wind, and where we expected to advance rapidly with the almost constant trade winds, we were becalmed and feared the possibility of never getting beyond the region of the horse latitudes. The calms alternated with contrary stormy winds that carried us several miles backward. The storms would be followed by calms accompanied by pitching and airlessness. For about three weeks we were exposed to this situation while still 400 miles away from our destination, the Sandwich Islands. Finally, the long awaited

N wind arose; it soon changed to NE and E, and after forty days of sailing we spotted land that looked like mist. Here occurred the question which always arises at sea: do we see the shoreline or clouds?

We had a navigator from a whaling ship on our clipper; he had had a fight with his captain and we were taking him to Honolulu at the request of our consul in Hakodate. He had spent seventeen years constantly sailing these waters and knew their whims, as well as the whims of local skies, like the palm of his hand. There was not a problem that he could not solve, and we nicknamed him "the living barometer". He would predict both a coming storm and the direction of a changing wind, both fine weather and rain—in a word, there was not a thing that "barometer" did not know. When a gale arose, we went to him for consolation, and if he said that after dinner it would die down, we were full of disdain for the waves that came overboard and the gusts of wind that roared and shook the rigging. But when, after getting caught in the dead calm of the horse latitudes, we questioned the American about the elusive trades, he became more and more at a loss as the days went by. All the signs were deceptive now: the fleecy clouds that frequently accompany trade winds, the glorious sunsets—eloquent signs of the tropics—made our "barometer" gradually lose confidence. He realized it himself, sadly kept silent, and spent nights on end on deck addressing a silent reproach to the elements that had betrayed him. Finally he became so angry that he decided not to come up at all. As soon as land was spotted he came to life again and climbed up to the crow's-nest. From that vantage point he could recognize the islands by their dim outlines as if they were his old friends.

We spent the entire day sailing with Morotai [Molokai] in view and toward evening turned into the strait which separates that island from Woahoo (or Oahu). It was getting dark when we began the approach to the Honolulu roadstead. Since it was dangerous to enter a roadstead protected by reefs from the open sea,—an unknown roadstead, at that—we dropped anchor outside the reef. From the direction of the beach the sound of the surf could be heard when the waves hit the coral reef; the air smelled of coconut oil. K. who had been here twice before, recognized the smell; he remembered the *kanaka*<sup>3</sup> girls and his youth. . . . Meantime the American noted a change in the sound of the surf with his attuned ear and predicted a gust from the shore, which did indeed come, sudden and loud.

In the morning we were able to see the beach. We were anchored not far from it, between Diamond Head and the town. Diamond Head—a promontory jutting out into the sea and a very important landmark—

resembled a tent with one side higher; its slopes have the appearance of regular ridges formed by ravines that descend from the summit to the plain and branch out into a multitude of smaller ravines. Palm groves stretch along the beach from Diamond Head to the town which is surmounted by Punch Bowl, a hill with steep sides and fortifications constructed on one of the elevations with a protruding glacis. Occasional palm trees, flagpoles, and masts marked the harbor which we were to enter. Behind the town is a gorge formed by green mountains which comprise the main elevation of the island. On the left the mass of the heights is broken by a vast plain, beyond which rise more mountains barely distinguished through the transparent mist. Long parallel lines of surf mark the reef, the white foam noisily splashing in a constant forward motion.

At dawn we fired a gun to summon the pilot and soon a boat appeared carrying a very presentable gentleman in a gray hat and blue coat. The passage between the reefs is very narrow, the channel is marked by special markers and floating barrels. The first marker carries a bell that rings when the apparatus is moved by a wave, so that those who know about the existence of this bell can find their way to the entrance even at night or in a fog. Several whaling ships were moored in the harbor and they all raised their flags at our approach. Two of these ships belonged to our Finland Company.<sup>4</sup> As we neared the shore the clipper was immediately besieged as if by a swarm of flies, by laundrymen (laundry is done here by men), factors, consular agents, and others—all eager for the arrival of a vessel, especially a navy vessel. Our entry into the harbor was followed by the arrival of a schooner, one of those that sail between the islands of the Hawaiian archipelago.

I cannot recall where I once read a description of such a schooner, the decks crowded with passengers—fat and thin *kanakas* of both sexes, Chinese, and sailors—along with cows, pigs, and dogs, so that the multilingual shouting of the crowd and the mooing of animals creates a cacaphony of unpleasant sounds. I was reminded of this description when gazing at the deck of the schooner which had just arrived. It seemed that not a single space was left vacant on deck; all those aboard were huddled into one solid mass, and if one were to make a casting of this mass it would make a splendid group. Surmounting everything, on a kind of elevation, reclined a huge, extremely fat, *kanaka* woman in a long dress, with a flower wreath on her dishevelled black hair and a garland of branches and leaves around her neck. One could see from afar that she was feeling the heat, and it seemed that the heat emanating from her body, as if from an oven, was melting the oil rubbed into her

hair. We were convinced that we could even smell the oil at a distance. Around her several hats of diverse shapes stuck up. They belonged apparently to a certain type of "business man" who either becomes a wealthy capitalist, or ends up as a sailor on the whaling ships, if not on the gallows. Closer to the side of the vessel stood a handsome *kanaka* in flannel jersey. He was not without an admixture of white blood which added grace to his trim figure, so that he looked more like a picture of an Italian gondolier. Next to him sat two very cute little young *kanaka* girls, with yellow wreaths on their black hair, and a ragamuffin in a strange outfit, with dubious skin color and even more dubious physiognomy. Among the secondary figures the group included a white European in a clean suit holding himself aloof and several sailors busy at the rigging. Add to this a sail thrown over the side in picturesque folds, several head of cattle, the noise and commotion—and you will share with me the pleasure of admiring this new Ark after having been exposed to the tightly regulated, uniformly monotonous life of a navy ship. Say what you will, I am less likely to admire a warrior in his faultlessly tailored uniform of the Guards with his rote step and well trained bearing, than some raggedy Circassian with his daring and agility, his harassed life requiring quick decisions, keen-wittedness, and presence of mind. May my friends the navy officers forgive me when I say that a navy ship reminds me of a military formation. The topgallant sheets tightly drawn (the necessity of which I do not question for a moment for I am even convinced that Nelson won the Battle of Trafalgar precisely because his topgallant sheets were drawn) are like well fitted military uniforms, while the taut rigging is like military drill and all that goes with it. The sight of the schooner in Honolulu, picturesquely draped in its sails, with the colorful details of disorder—I cannot help it—provides much greater pleasure to me. Or take a whaling ship. What admiration it arouses with its ill assorted crew as it arrives from the Arctic with patched sails, its sides scraped by waves, with a captain whose personality immediately reflects the life that he alone can bear, fighting the sea and whales by day, keeping a gun under his pillow by night against the sudden bursting in of his crew intent on throwing him overboard. All these signs of the inner life of a vessel are reflected in the physiognomy of the vessel itself, and vessels with character are just as interesting as people. The whaler and the schooner in Honolulu had character, while the navy ship did not, just as some service people lack it and scores of them look exactly alike. For instance, take the gentleman standing on the quarter-deck of our ship. He is an excellent type, and encountering such people in the bazaar of life is very interesting. No sooner had we dropped anchor than he

appeared. He is the clerk of our agent and is dressed in a lightweight silk suit and a straw hat. His face somehow resembles Mephistopheles as depicted in mediocre drawings, but the kind and complaisant expression of his eyes destroys any idea of looking for a relationship to the enemy of mankind. He is tall and very slim; when talking he waves his arms, bends forward toward you, seems to squat somehow, and at the same time attempts to preserve the manners of a gentleman. From the start he begins to move about, talk to everyone at once because he cannot remain still. Approaching us, he quickly and in short sentences depicted what we must do in Honolulu, talked about the king, the "hula-hula", mentioned that the shirt he was wearing cost eighteen dollars a dozen, and without consulting us despotically forced us to agree to take a ride into the suburbs after dinner. We consented, without knowing how it happened. He disappeared in an instant, like a ghost disappears on stage during a ballet performance; one could not say for sure whether he jumped overboard, turned into a mast, or got into a boat and left. Our first impression was that he was a scoundrel. Later we regretted our misjudgment, having become convinced that he did everything from the bottom of his heart and that he was one of the most conscientious and decent people. Having the ability to disappear in an instant, he would appear just as suddenly, and precisely at the moment when needed, as if he read our thoughts. I am convinced that if I knew how to recite in German the magic incantation "Chestnut-gray, hear and obey", I could evoke his presence even in St. Petersburg.<sup>5</sup>

Baskets filled with bananas, oranges, greens, cabbage, meat, and all the other wonderful things we had not seen for a long time appeared on the deck of the clipper. The clipper was made fast, that is lines were let out from the deck and tied to the pier. Buildings with signs in large letters faced the harbor and from the small balconies on high roofs the owners peered through long telescopes out to sea wondering whether "white sails were in sight and any ships approaching."<sup>6</sup>

Some of the houses appear half built, as though sliced off at a dividing wall. People were congregated on the beach along the wooden landings, curious to catch sight of the arriving navy ship. Some fifty years ago a crowd also ran out to the beach to meet the arrival of a ship—but what a difference! Then, only a few reed huts stood here and there along this beach, shaded by banana and coconut palms. Women did not conceal the beauty of their shapely figures, and completely unaware of any feeling of shame, naïvely displaying themselves, plunged into the waves, and racing with each other, swam out to greet the guests. Their husbands and brothers looked at the newcomers with suspicion, but suppressed

their feeling of jealousy out of hospitality. They surrounded the ship in their light canoes offering coral, coconuts—and their wives and sisters. Today the canoes still come out to the ships with coral. Each is manned by a *kanaka* in a blue jersey and a straw hat. The sound of his native speech is intermingled with some new sounds: "half dollar, one real," etc.; he bargains persistently, offering certificates to the effect that he is an excellent laundryman, or can deliver anything that is wanted. The women who crowd the docks today wear even more clothing than is necessary. The missionaries have invented for them a costume resembling the ancient peignoir, a kind of dressing gown, that falls down to the feet. Only the flower wreaths have remained from the former simple costume. Besides women the crowd consisted of sailors and wherry men (almost all *kanakas*) in flannel jerseys—bright colored on the young and the dandies, blue or white on more sedate individuals—and completely faded ones on people who are not sedate at all, those who have taken to drink, have lost everything and are unhappy. Among the latter there is a fair number of sailors from the whaling ships who cannot find work on ships because they have become known as good-for-nothings.\*

Honolulu, a town with the characteristics of other places that developed in a similar manner, owes its existence, first of all, to the whalers; they had selected its harbor, protected from the sea by the reefs and by the mountains from the NE trades, for their mooring and rest on their passage from America to the Arctic seas and from the Bering Strait to the South Pacific. Here their sailors could find vegetables, fresh meat, women, and everything that is needed by a seaman during a brief rest. The whalers were followed by the missionaries, who found in the inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands rich soil, if not for the word of Christ at any rate for other activities. The missionary, appearing among the coffee colored tribes, took along a bible and in addition a small supply of goods, mostly cloth and various other items. At one end of the village he preached, at the other end he opened a shop. The preaching loudly attacked immorality and the shame of going about naked. Not suspecting any immorality in her primitive costume, the *Kanaka* Eve finally became convinced that it was necessary to cover up her nakedness and decided to obtain some clothing. But where could she get the money? She went out, braided the best flowers of the valley into her

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\* For sailors who miss a vessel by accident and who have to spend the winter in Honolulu, the Society of Whalers has organized a kind of charity hostel where these sailors may find, for a small price, both board and lodging. If the cost goes above five dollars a month, the society assumes the difference. Of course, sailors with bad credentials are not accepted in this institution.



black tresses, caught a strolling sailor, and along with the dollar acquired the beginning of the dreadful disease that has spread so rapidly throughout Polynesia. Having obtained the dollars she went to the missionary store and bought the clothing: morality triumphed, nakedness was covered! And in the meantime a new house appeared in town, constructed by the missionary who had become rich, and the street lost its native appearance and acquired a European look. Another missionary had a hat shop. Ladies' hats did not sell well, and indeed what *kanaka* woman would think of exchanging her luxurious decoration of flowers and leaves for a few rags thrown like a caricature over her head? So the preacher elaborated on the Biblical text requiring that women should cover their heads upon entering the temple of God and, at the same time, pointed to the sisters in black hats. Next Sunday all the female parishioners appeared in black hats. These hats can still be seen on the heads of all *kanaka* women during services at the main Protestant church. In all probability, this missionary also did not remain in a grass shack, but built himself a house with balconies and a garden, and the town continued to grow. The harbor attracted merchant and navy vessels on the way from America to China. The Islands were rich in sandalwood which was being cut down mercilessly. For a pack of tobacco or a bottle of liquor a resourceful schemer could have great loads of trees cut down and taken to China, where they were sold or exchanged for other goods. With the development of California, Honolulu became the indispensable stop-over for ships proceeding to Shanghai or Hong Kong. Business offices, banks, and brokers appeared; entire streets developed; the buildings acquired the decor of huge lettered signs. The religious sects conducted their propaganda in huge churches decorated by lancet arches and gothic turrets. The European families found it uncomfortable to continue living in the town itself. They began to build homes in the valley [Nuuanu] adjoining the gorge, embellishing these comfortable abodes with small gardens. A whole new generation of half whites, a mixture of *kanakas* and Europeans, was growing up in the local community. Throughout the well-endowed islands sugar and coffee plantations were introduced; mulberry trees, grapes, and arrowroot were planted; Chinese laborers were brought in by contractors—and so Honolulu, as a center of general activity both in trade and administration of the kingdom, developed year by year and came to be as we found it. It lies, as I have already mentioned, on the coast of the island of Oahu. Its main trading firms expose their signs to the ships in the harbor. Its population is around 8,000 inhabitants, while the population of the entire island reaches 20,000. The population of the entire archipelago



does not exceed 70,000, that is to say one third of the number of inhabitants at the time of Cook. Between the reefs and the shore the shallow water is divided into several square ponds or sections for breeding fish, which is one of the chief sources of the wealth of the Sandwich Islanders. Each of these ponds belongs to a private owner. These nursery ponds can be seen from the clipper on the left. Beyond them, on a protruding point, stands the prison fortress, made of stone and with a stone wall surrounding its yard. To the right one can see the Parliament Building<sup>7</sup>—a house with high steps and three large wide windows. Beyond the point, where dirt is being constantly transported somewhere in wheelbarrows, there is another bay, the entire shoreline of which is covered with small houses and huts under rustling palms. At the point where these beautiful trees are clumped into a small grove, one can discern between their bare trunks the tentlike shape of Diamond Head, the Sandwich Islands Chatyrdag.<sup>8</sup> Right above the town are the mountain peaks of the island with a gorge cutting through their mass; the valley lying in the gorge is spotted with the summer homes of the Europeans. It is surmounted by the rocks and greenery of the mountains that are now lost in mist and clouds, which cast a dark shadow or let through a few bright sun rays onto the picturesque valley and the town.

Coming ashore I was naturally as pleased as someone who had just been released from prison. In every tree, in every little bush I perceived a living thing that was ready to take part in my rejoicing. Soon I left behind the regular streets, almost all of which cross each other at right angles. The streets were deserted for it was Christmas. If the English towns are lonely on holidays, the towns inhabited by American Methodists are twice as lonely. The shops are closed and the shop signs gaze at you meaninglessly from the roofs and walls like epitaphs. I was in a hurry to get beyond the town or reach some streets where there would be more greenery, more shade, and more life. Finally, I reached some huts almost completely concealed by banana palms. Some places were planted in taro, the plant that comprises the mainstay of the *kanakas* and from which they make their poi, the daily bread of the entire population. I reached some tamarind trees with their wide-spread, feathery and graceful leafage and palm trees with their rustling tops, and found fresh air without any dampness or cold from the sea atmosphere. Here the air was filled with the breath of countless plants which gave it both power and refreshing strength.

Hardly anyone appeared in the streets. Occasionally a lightweight cabriolet would dash by with a couple of primly dressed American women; or one would encounter one or two *kanaka* women in bright

holiday peignoirs (I cannot think of any other name for their dresses), with flowers in their hair, with orange-colored wreaths gracefully posed on their black oily hair, framing their coffee-colored faces. When first glancing at their faces one is struck by a kind of harshness, but the eyes reflect a gentle and conciliatory expression. I briefly entered two churches—at first the Baptist church, which looked more like a comfortable auditorium. The polished oak benches were upholstered in velvet, a luxurious carpet covered the floor, the polished shutters let in just enough light, and harmonious singing was heard from the choir gallery. The praying parishioners were all dressed up, but there was not a single *kanaka* face among them. The pastor was preaching in an impassioned voice from his polished pulpit. This prayer meeting might be called a musical matinée, especially since several smart carriages were waiting at the church entrance. Not finding what I was looking for here, I went into the Catholic church, which was just across the street. The church looked like a long barn, with the altar way down at the end. Gold foil, candles, the Bishop's golden miter, the chasubles and garb of the clergy, the incense—from afar all of this somehow intermingled and appeared as one glittering mass. Along the entire length of both sides of the structure there were galleries filled with people. Harmonious singing to the accompaniment of a clarinet was heard from above from time to time. People were sitting on the floor, except for the whites for whom a special place was set on the side. Those who were not in the reserved section were offered chairs. I was also offered a chair by a tall gray-haired old woman with a face as if made out of cardboard and with sharp lines on her forehead and cheeks. Recalling the saying "When in Rome do as the Romans do," I accepted the offered chair without any further discussion and began to examine the picturesque audience seated in front and all around me. The entire group was most colorful because of the multicolored dresses, the striking features, and the flowers that decorated the expressive, sculptured figures of the natives. Their poses demonstrated that the clothing was a burden, that it was something they did not need, that it got in their way. Instinctively they were right, because the clothing, perhaps more than anything else, had a fatal influence on the destiny of the entire local population. Wishing to keep up with her friends, a *kanaka* woman puts on everything she possibly can and under the burden of this weight sits as in a steam bath. The better the weather, and consequently the hotter the day, the more finery she will want to show off. After church she returns to her hut, quickly removes everything and lies down in front of a window through which a refreshing trade wind constantly blows. A slight cold becomes chronic;

an occasional cough becomes permanent. The weakness of chest is passed on to the children, and so the entire population is withering, acquiring a variety of respiratory diseases, from a slight catarrh to consumption. One seldom encounters a native woman who is not afflicted with a cough.

But the congregation praying at the church was amazingly original. Not a line, not a single color was indefinite or transitional. Everything was expressed in sharp lines. Everything stood out in bright colors, from the green leaf clearly outlined against the background of black hair to the fold of the black or colored dress; from the bright fiery eye without any hint of slyness or cunning to the large lips in sharp lines, and not compressed as would be lips expressing anger or constraint. Look at the white-haired old women: what faces full of character, what strength and stature, what assurance of movement! The metis, on the other hand, are already showing signs of languor and weakness. But the *kanaka* does not mix easily with the European whose blood dilutes with water his southern blood. Frequently one can see completely different colored hair on the same head—black mixed with blond—as if the black native hair, having ceded some space to the blond did not wish to give up its color.

After dinner we drove into the valley in a fourseated tilbury. The valley rises gradually, so that we had to ride uphill. Right after leaving the town we came upon summer homes built in the style of English cottages. The vacant lots between them were planted with taro which needs water just like rice. Each house is surrounded by a small garden—spreading tamarind trees, acacia, banana and coconut palms with leaves growing right out of the ground, multicolored flower bushes—all of this showed from behind the fences neatly made of white rock. Beyond the houses are the reed huts of the natives resembling in shape our hay stacks. Several colorful figures were resting at the entrance of the huts. The clear air made it possible to examine the smallest detail in the mountains which stand on both sides of the valley. The thick mass of forest growing at the top gave the impression of being a raised decoration stuck on the gray rocks. White dots appeared on the rocks. Looking closely we noticed that the dots moved and discerned a flock of wild goats moving along the sheer cliff. Toward evening people taking a constitutional began to appear on the road. The European and American women, weakened by the heat, took advantage of the cool of the evening to give their langorous bodies an outing in a cabriolet. A *kanaka* woman swept by on horseback, the bright shawl<sup>9</sup> that covered her legs waving on both sides out from under the horse's hooves. Who taught the *kanaka* women to

ride horseback? The horse appeared in the Sandwich Islands with the Europeans, not more than forty years ago. When did the entire population have time to become so attached to this dashing sport? There is not a woman, nor a young girl who is not an excellent rider. She rides the horse like a male, not trusting the dubious pose of our side-saddle amazons. The legs are wrapped in a long shawl, usually of a bright color, and the ends of the shawl fly far out in the wind. If the horse becomes tired, she will unsaddle it herself and let it graze in the field. Later she will lasso it, saddle it, and continue her ride. On the way up we saw the king's summer cottage, a small house with a few trees growing around it. On the way back, the entire distance that we had covered—the valley with the houses and mountains, then the valley below the mountains, and finally the town, the reef and the sea—all of it suddenly came into view! The sun was setting, sinking into a layer of fog that hung on the boundary between the sea and the sky. The sun's rays did not spread their light over the details of the landscape, but lay like some transparent, lusterless sheet over everything, erasing the sharp lines and salient points. The house roofs, tall palms, ship masts, all blended together. Only the steeple of the Protestant Church, as if freed from the drowsiness that enveloped everything, stood out clearly above the houses. A ship was visible at a distance, tacking toward the port, but then it turned and started out to sea.

"There, it is furling the mainsail," remarked one of our group, an old sailor, as if he could see the ship's maneuver from where we were. But that's the habit of seagoing men: to see what others do not notice. It is called having a nautical eye. The ship looked like some dark cockroach, moving slowly and gradually disappearing in the evening mist.

It was getting dark. *Kanaka* families sat at the house gates, following the habit of their fathers who used to sit around in front of their huts. An old grandmother, lost in thought, sits very still, her bony chin resting on her hands, her knees wrapped in a motley shawl. Several young *kanaka* girls, dressed in black smocks, with flowers and leaves in their hair, cling to the fence. A woman suddenly approaches on her worn out horse. The ends of her yellow shawl hang way down to the ground. The horse's head hangs down and a dark eyed, black-haired youngster offers her a drink of water in a jug-like gourd. The sound of strings is heard from somewhere up above. The air is warm, but not stifling. The daturas have awakened and spread their enchanting aroma over the passers-by. It is wonderful to be on land after having been at sea. Only those "having a nautical eye" will think of "furling mainsails" or "royal masts and top sails"! . . .

I have mentioned the variety of elements that contributed to the creation of Honolulu. This variety will become even more apparent if we examine closely its population. To know Honolulu one must know its social structure. I would divide the entire population into four classes. First of all, the central nucleus around which the other classes were formed is composed of the native *kanakas* with their land-owning aristocracy and their former slaves, who are now free but landless. Where did this tribe come from? The Hawaiian legend calls the first man Kaiko [Kahiko-loa-mea] (the ancient one) and the first woman Kupulanakehau. She gave birth to their son, Wakea. A certain Kukaniehu with his wife Kahakaukoko, came to join them from far off lands. (What lands—eastern or western? The legend does not say, although this would be most important.) They had a daughter Papa. Wakea and Papa were the progenitors of all the people, of both the chiefs and the commoners.

The inquisitive European mind could not help but wonder about the origin of the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands and of Polynesians in general. Several hypotheses were proposed, each bolder than the others, but not one of them withstood critical analysis. Thus, back in the 17th Century the inhabitants of Polynesia were considered to be of the same stock as the natives of America and their common origin was traced to the Jews. Whiston<sup>10</sup> tried to prove that the first inhabitants of America were the Cainites, the descendants of Cain, through Lamech who had escaped the Deluge, even though the deist Martin[?] affirmed that the American Indians have nothing in common with the inhabitants of Polynesia. Manasseh ben-Israel, the Jewish rabbi, [1604–1657] in his work *La speranza di Israel* wrote that America was populated by the descendants of the last ten tribes of Israel. This book was dedicated to the British Parliament. In 1650, William Penn<sup>11</sup> was absolutely convinced that this theory was correct and published a work entitled *Historical Proof of the Identity of the Ten Tribes and the Aborigines of the Western Hemisphere*.

The supposition that Oceania was populated from the east is more plausible. The difference between the natives of America and Oceania in language, as well as customs and mores, was always obvious. Cortez and Pizarro were surprised by the advanced civilization among the ancient Aztecs and Peruvian chiefs. Nothing like it was ever discovered on the islands of Polynesia.

The works of Wilhelm Humboldt and Professor Buchman<sup>12</sup> have proven effectively the relationship between these islanders and the Malays. A new question arose: what was the method of navigation of

people to these remote islands from the Malay archipelago? The patterns of migration decided the fate of this entire race. Even today whole families set out to sea taking a chance in small boats and by accident land on some uninhabited island where they settle. Moving thus from island to island, from archipelago to archipelago, this tribe gradually settled New Zealand, the Society Islands, the Friendly Islands [Tonga], the Navigators [Samoa] the Sandwich Islands, and others. The inhabitants of all of these islands are very similar in appearance and customs, speak the same language, and have similar legends clearly indicating their eastern origin.\* For instance, one of their gods, Maui Akalana, stopped the sun in its motion. The Fiji mythology has a legend that the world was created by the highest of all dieties, called I Ndenji or Tenji, who inhabited high mountain tops. He had a son who acted as go-between for him and the people. Fairly widespread is the legend of a deluge, with hints of an Ark which they call *laau*, a kind of a floating house holding people, animals, and large amounts of supplies. Even the name of Noah occurs in these legends.

Customs confirm this relationship even further. The Hawaiians sacrificed the fruit of their first crops to God. The Samoans did likewise. Before the arrival of the missionaries, circumcision was a common practice among the Hawaiians. It was performed by a priest during religious ceremonies. Anyone who had come in contact with something considered unclean had to submit to a ritual of purification. The Jews also had all these customs. Women after childbirth were considered unclean. Hawaiians, just like the Jews, had places of refuge that served the same purpose and offered the same protection.

The study of the language showed clearly its Malay origin. Wilhelm Humboldt has traced its gradual transformation following the disintegration of these tribes into innumerable branches. When a structure falls apart into separate building blocks it is not easy to discover the original plan of the entire structure from separate blocks.

\* Williams writes: "If we consider the distance between the Sandwich Islands and the Malay archipelago, which is 100 degrees or 7000 miles, it seems impossible at first glance to imagine how the inhabitants could have managed to get there in their fragile vessels with imperfect knowledge of navigation. And, if we were to assert that they came directly to the Sandwich Islands, the assertion could not possibly be sustained. But all objections disappear, if we assume migration in short and easy stages. A migrant from Sumatra can attain Borneo (300 miles); the Straits of Macassar separate it from Celebes (200 miles); New Guinea is 10 degrees away (with two large islands, Bessey and Ceram on the way). The distance from New Guinea to New Hebrides is 1200 miles, but numerous small islands intervene. The Fijis are 500 miles from New Hebrides, the Friendly Islands 300 miles farther on, and so forth."<sup>13</sup>



The second class among the inhabitants of Honolulu are the whites—Europeans and Americans—who keep themselves apart and who probably consider themselves the true aristocrats.

The third class are the metis, the part whites. Those Europeans who have decided to settle here forever marry *kanaka* women, and it is their descendants that constitute this class. The pure whites are not very well disposed toward them, and almost never receive them in their midst. On the other hand, all visitors prefer to frequent the homes of the metis whose behavior seems to reflect the customs of Lima and Buenos Aires. The daughters of the metis are pretty, free in their manners, lively, and coquettish, but preserve purity of morals. American women, on the other hand, are boring and preach morality, which does not necessarily mean that they actually practice it.

"I can easily understand why you come so seldom to see us", said one of the Americans to me, "you are bored with us. . . . You seek the society of women, and the society of our wives is tiresome to you. Furthermore, in the local climate, a white woman is somehow in a constant state of fatigue. A warm climate predisposes one to languor and inactivity, one's mind and imagination fall victim to the same influence. However, the half-white woman is in her native element. White blood has endowed her with lightness and a more graceful shape, while black blood contributed to a warm and lively disposition. Of course, I am not speaking about deep feelings. They are indifferent to feeling, and do not understand the ideal of pure bliss. Affinity of soul is foreign to them. They are influenced by a touch of the hand, a beckoning glance, a kiss, and the dark night filled with the aroma of jasmine and daturas. The native or metis woman will spend several entrancing hours with you and as a farewell gesture will remove the white jasmine wreath from her hair and put it on your head. You have been at sea, have not seen women, and have not felt their magic charm for a long time. It is understandable that you seek the company of the half-whites."

This was the opinion, and a correct one, expressed by an American who was once a *bon vivant*, but is now married. White blood had imperceptibly penetrated the veins of the leading families. The queen, daughter of Naea and Kekela has one third white blood because the mother of her mother, that is to say her grandmother, was white.<sup>14</sup> Mme. Bischoff [Bernice Pauahi Bishop], daughter of [Chief] Paki and Konia, almost certainly has mixed blood. Otherwise, why should a native lady, even a cousin to the king, look exactly like a heroine from a novel by George Sand?

The last class I consider to be comprised of the Portuguese, Chilians,



Chinese, and all those who have assembled here from the ends of the earth in search of fortune, all those adventurers who stake their future, like a gambler his last ruble, on a card; who start all kinds of careers; who have been deceived by luck in the California gold mines and come here somehow hoping to pull themselves up by doing laundry, fishing, working on whaling ships somewhere in the Arctic; or finally end up on the gallows, no longer fearing another bankruptcy.

I became acquainted with many representatives of all four classes. Almost every evening I made several visits (calling here is done in the evening), in order to keep up my acquaintances. The visits to the homes of the whites were very brief. You always enter the house through the garden, where you are exposed to a whirl of aromas. On the verandah you wipe your feet on a door mat and finally find yourself in a beautiful gas-lit room with a rug-covered table in the middle and several rocking chairs. There is not a single room in Honolulu without one. The walls are decorated with portraits of Victoria and Albert. The conservatives will have portraits of Alexander Liholiho, Kamehameha IV, the present king of Hawaii, who in this portrait has the appearance of a somewhat suspicious-looking Spaniard. You shake hands with the host and hostess and take a seat. The conversation starts:

"Have you been to Japan?" "Oh yes!" "Is Japan better than China?" "There is no comparison." "What about the Japanese women, how do they wear their hair?" and so on.

If the husband wishes to be exceptionally polite, he will go into the adjoining room, silently bring a tray with a carafe of sherry, pour out a glassful for himself, and say to you: "A glass of sherry?" He will give you a nod and drink it. You nod your head in response, give a nod to the hostess, take your hat, shake hands again and leave, wondering to yourself how you can manage to avoid this gay company in the future.

But what a difference when you turn into a side street and call on the half whites! First of all, you do not meet either their mothers, their fathers, or their husbands. Fathers and husbands spend their time somewhere else, no one knows where. The mothers are busy taking care of children in another room or are busy sewing for their daughters, or are occupied with some household chores. It is the daughters' duty to receive guests and entertain them, and in general they are free to do whatever they wish. At the entrance to such a house you frequently see old *kanaka* ladies seated on the floor. This is one of the grandmothers admiring her granddaughter, who is dressed up in European style and looks like a young European lady. And the granddaughter, in the course

of the evening, will run out a couple of times to give her grandmother a kiss on her gray coarse hair.

Here is a house we particularly liked to visit. Miss Becky greets us at the gate. She is a dark-eyed seventeen year old, with a string of jasmine wound twice around her shining black hair. She is as happy to see us as if we were members of the family, greets us gaily and runs to the house like a child, inviting us to follow. If the house did not have wallpaper and a few pieces of European furniture, it would be just like a native hut. It consists of a single large room, one third of which is separated by a huge curtain [Pākū]. People sleep and eat in the section behind the curtain; white guests are received in the front. In the middle of the room stands a table with a few picture albums in pretty bindings. A rocking chair stands by the table, and a favored guest whom they wish to make most comfortable is seated there. In the corner stands a couch, not very new, but somehow comfortable in spite of its hardness. On the wall hangs a portrait of Napier and one of some *kanaka* woman with a baby in her arms. It is done in oils resembling those paintings in our attics representing someone's grandmother with an amazingly small waist and a rose in her hand or an aunt with a lap dog. Of course, we brought some candy which is consumed heartily on the spot, both by the guests and the hosts who help themselves by the handful. Miss Becky has a young aunt, Miss Hattie, with dark eyes, black hair, dark skin, and amazingly fine features. Her smile, sad and langorous, something in the manner of a provincial young lady, reveals a row of remarkably white teeth. She talks in a sentimental manner and asks to have her fortune told with cards. One of us decides to do it, while mutual efforts are applied to translate into English the expressions learned in childhood from nannies: "An interest close to heart, journey, fulfillment of one's wishes, cruel rival, bridal bed" and so forth. The sentimental young lady becomes frightened and joyful in turns, and playful Becky bursts out laughing. Should we tire of sitting inside, we all go to visit Mathe and Lucy, other acquaintances who live in a beautiful house, but are just as simple and good-natured as the inhabitants of the little house on the side street. Then we go to have some ice cream and return home in the glorious night. Beneath the spreading trees frequently, like ghosts, appear figures of *kanakas* and their girl friends, who probably are enjoying as much as we are the beauty of the night and the voluptuous aroma of the flowers.

To become acquainted with the fourth class we went one evening to Liberty Hall, a kind of public hall where one pays a dollar for entrance fee and supper. Balls are given here only twice a year and, fortunately,

we just happened to catch one. I have attended sailors' dances in Hamburg where they are famous for their originality, but the Hamburg balls were as nothing compared to what happened here. The *kanaka* girls in long smocks, with their abrupt movements, sparkling eyes, and flower wreaths on their heads, look like some kind of demons whirling around in a demoniacal dance. Their dances turn out to be a mixture of hula-hula and cancan. Sometimes a dance partner, of course a tall Yankee, varies the dance by a swift jig, singing his Yankee-doodle at the same time. All of this is intermingled with shouting, music, foot stamping and whistling. The house, which is built of wooden slats, shakes from floor to ceiling. Sometimes everyone dashes to the balcony from which they watch a couple of Yankees who have decided to end an argument by a boxing match and are trying to convince each other with swift blows.

From the ball I will take you to a funeral where we get a closer look at *kanakas*. A nephew of the king, the son of one of his sisters and a descendant of Kamehameha I, died shortly before our arrival.<sup>15</sup> We were invited to the funeral, which was followed by a procession suitable to the deceased, who was a member of the royal household. A hermetically sealed redwood coffin, containing the body, stood under a black canopy in the house of Governor [Mataio] Kekuanaoa, the father of the present king. Huge fans [kahilis] made of feathers stood in front of the house. They are carried during all the processions—coronations, weddings, and funerals in the royal family. A gray haired little old man in a general's uniform decorated with a blue ribbon, was the master of ceremonies and met us on the balcony. He supplied us with black crepe arm bands and showed us the room where the deceased lay in state. Several ladies in black dresses and the Governor in a general's uniform were seated there. We paid our respects and went outside, where we joined the crowd and stood waiting for the procession. A copper gun with a catafalque arranged on it stood in the yard. By a strange series of coincidences it turned out to be a Russian gun, which had been captured along with others on the Island of Kauai. Several guns had been left by the famous adventurer, who had escaped on a ship that had been captured in Kamchatka.<sup>16</sup> The King's regiment was marching along the street to the sound of drums and flutes. It consisted of a hundred and fifty soldiers trimly dressed in uniform coats and armed with carbines. General Matai,<sup>17</sup> a handsome man wearing a helmet with white and red plumes waving in the breeze, rode ahead of the regiment. The regiment drew up in the yard and presented arms. Soon the procession commenced. It was headed by the doctor and the pastor, the former being the main culprit of this sad

occasion. Following them were about a hundred *kanakas* wearing sailor jackets and pulling the catafalque by two long ropes, with huge fans carried next to it. Behind the catafalque, in a light carriage, rode the Queen accompanied by Princess Charlotte,<sup>18</sup> the mother of the deceased, and an unidentified small boy. Two of her doctors rode on horseback behind the Queen. Because of the Hussar-like uniforms that they wore, they looked more like two adjutants. Then followed a long line of *kanaka* ladies. They all walked in pairs, were in deep mourning, and looked very much like a flock of crows extending in a straight line toward their native forest. Some of them were accompanied by important people, such as the governor, ministers, and all those mortals who are distinguished from the rest by their gold epaulets or some other similar insignia. People silently watched the moving procession; only occasionally would some huge women launch forward and begin to wail, presumably extolling the virtues of the deceased. Several such wailers, in a sort of wild ecstasy, followed the procession at a distance.

Wishing to get there ahead of the funeral procession, we took a back way and reached the garden which holds the crypt of the royal tombs.<sup>19</sup> A small white house, with a wooden roof very much like the ones we see in our country cemeteries, stood among the trees. A rider on a white horse appeared before us in the garden and looking around stopped suddenly. This was Prince William.<sup>20</sup> He is the King's cousin and one of the richest princes in the kingdom. By birth, Prince William seems to be of higher rank than the King and could have been very influential, but unfortunately he is one of the most disreputable young men in the entire Hawaiian Kingdom. He cannot be entrusted with anything and therefore he does not hold any post. When he is sober he is very pleasant and clever, but when he gets drunk he spends his time hanging around the taverns, bowling with the sailors, and listens to no one. Even now his proper place was, of course, in the procession. He dismounted and led us toward the crypt, where the Chief of Police had no right to let anyone in before the arrival of the procession. The Prince began to argue with him, grabbed the key from his hand, and we entered the sepulchre of the royal family.

The coffins stood on the floor and on shelves. In the middle stood a coffin covered in luxurious velvet and gold containing the remains of Kamehameha III. In front of his coffin a small table held the crown used in the coronations of the kings. To the left stood the coffin of Kamehameha II, who died in London. Two other coffins stood there: that of Paki and his wife, the parents of Mme. Bischoff. To the right was the coffin of the drunken Prince William's mother and the coffin of

Mr. Rooke, the father of the Queen, and the coffin of the famous John Young, who had been left here by Vancouver for the sake of British politics<sup>21</sup> and who had become the friend and chief advisor of Kamehameha I. No one knows where the first Hawaiian king, Kamehameha I, is buried. On the night of his death his body was taken into the hills by the *kanakas* and the location of his grave, like that of Ghenghis Khan, remains unknown. In front of these stood two small coffins of the poisoned children of Kamehameha III. The two were victims of aristocratic prejudice. Their mother was part white, while the mother of the present king belonged to one of the chiefly clans. The importance of the clan is determined here not through the father, but through the mother.\* The children were poisoned and thus the principle upheld. The Prince related this story to us very calmly as if the event had occurred some five hundred years ago, but in actual fact the children were his cousins.<sup>22</sup>

But now the sounds of the funeral march became clearly audible. The fans appeared from behind the wall and the procession slowed down somewhat, because the catafalque would not fit through the gate. We were told that this happens each time, but no one wants to make the catafalque lower. The coffin was removed from the carriage and carried by hand toward the crypt. The fans were placed by the little house, but after the funeral they were replaced by old ones, because they have to stand here until all the feathers are carried away by the wind. All those who followed the procession formed a wide semicircle. The Queen stood not far from us. Her dark face expressed much sorrow and a kind of weariness. It was not grief for the deceased that brought on this anguish and the expression of quiet resignation on her appealing face—a sad drama was taking place in the family, and hers was not a minor part. Through her grandmother she is part American. Having been orphaned when still a young child, she was taken in by Dr. Rooke who brought her up and adopted her. After his death he left her, along with his name, all his estate. Miss Rooke did not remain a *kanaka* by nature. She could not reconcile herself to the status of a slave, which would have been unquestionably accepted by a native women. Her husband, the King, had a male secretary, an American. Perhaps some careless glance or a careless word aroused the suspicion of the husband. Of noble spirit, kind, but short tempered and easily excitable as a true *kanaka*, the

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\* That is why the father of the present king is only a governor. The mother of the former was an ordinary *kanaka* woman, while the mother of the latter was of royal blood.

Hawaiian Othello, in a fit of jealousy took a shot at his secretary and critically wounded him. The outburst of passion was followed by repentance. The seriously wounded victim was transported to Maui where the repenting jealous husband was spending days and nights at the bedside of the invalid. He was there at the present time because the invalid's condition took a turn for the worse. The King had proclaimed that should the secretary die he would abdicate from the throne in favor of his son, and would submit himself to justice as an ordinary citizen. I was familiar with the story and it seemed to me that the eyes of the unfortunate woman revealed both the anguish, the melancholy, and the feeling of offended dignity.<sup>23</sup>

The coffin was carried into the small house; the pastor said a few words, and everyone departed. Only a few women from among the common people, scattered here and there at different distances from the grave, continued to wail in terrifying voice. We were told that at the death of the last king several thousand *kanaka* women wailed at the cemetery, but that at present they are chased away and not permitted to perform such concerts.

On the clipper we were paid a visit by the King's brother, Prince [Lot] Kamehameha who was accompanied by Wyllie, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Finance,<sup>24</sup> and General Matai. The Prince is a tall man, with a broad coffee-colored face, a small nose, black moustache, and that good-natured expression which is typical of the *kanaka* physiognomy. His dark eyes reflected intelligence. He occupies a rather important position, is well educated, has been to Europe, and is extremely informal in his behavior. He was wearing a straw hat and a raspberry-colored ribbon with a small star that was visible under his jacket.

Wyllie, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is Scotch and represents the British influence, which is opposing the American desire to make a separate state out of the Sandwich Islands and annex it to the North American confederacy. He has the face of an old intelligent and faithful watch dog, adorned by white sidewhiskers that fall in thin wisps from his reddish flabby wrinkled cheeks. He is probably the most remarkable personality in Honolulu. He has organized the entire ceremonial procedure at court. He also very skillfully conducted negotiations with the Americans and managed to steal and destroy the treaty document with the United States that had already been signed by the late King when he had been given too much to drink. He stood firm when the French appeared with a landing party intending to obtain by force the right to duty-free import of liquor. Customs duties are the chief source of



income for the kingdom. In appearance he is a true courtier with evasive and effusive speech constantly scattered with such expressions as: "His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen," etc. Under his frock coat he wore a single blue ribbon without a star.

The Minister of Finance looked just like a master of ceremonies at official dinners, but General Matai had one of those faces that one cannot help liking in spite of the coffee-colored skin, coarse kinky hair, and a large mouth. He is of medium height with a beautiful physique. Many local ladies are in love with him, which did not surprise me. His kind and appealing face does reveal signs of some inner ailment, which makes him all the more interesting. Everyone is very fond of him as well as of his wife, a native *kanaka* woman.

The following day we had a visit from Governor Kekuanaoa, father of the King. He has a most interesting appearance: a small white beard hangs from the parchment-like skin of his face, eyebrows hang over the slyly sparkling eyes, while the slightly hooked nose lies flat against his cheeks. The *kanakas* are afraid of him and believe implicitly anything that Kekuanaoa says. On the clipper he paid us and our country an amusing compliment. "Your clipper may be worth one real, if all of Russia is one million reals, because the size of the clipper bears the same relationship to the size of Russia, as one real does to a million. But your clipper is worth much more than just one real. Hence, how great and beautiful Russia must be!" Because I am a doctor he felt it necessary to show me his shrivelled hand.

Now, having become acquainted with the most outstanding personalities of Honolulu, let us proceed. If my narrative is too fragmentary, the fault lies with the nature of our voyage. We did not stay long enough to get a good look at a country, to capture all of its peculiar traits within the total harmonious picture, and to acquire a better understanding. Each new scene or personality is interesting to us, and we grasp at anything, as a sailor lost in fog grasps at the flashing light of a distant beacon, hoping that it will lead him along the true course.

One night, returning to the clipper along the waterfront, we heard the sounds of a beating drum. A crowd was gathered at a crossroad. Two drummers in plumed hats were mercilessly beating their drums, a large one that was similar to our Turkish drums, and an ordinary one. It was not hard to guess that this was an alarm call. What happened? What for? We were told that the militia was gathering. A large building next to the pier was lit up. We asked if we could enter and were told that it was permitted. We enter the hall, which is well lit and filled with groups of military in gray coats with silver epaulets holding guns. One of them



bows to us and we recognize the respectable-looking, gray haired and balding little old man in glasses who tends the Hackfeld store. At this moment he represents Mercury transformed into Mars. The soldiers were soon lined up, roll-call followed, and training started to the sound of the drums outside. The formations, we noted, were more like figures from a mazurka. The commander in charge was a stout gentleman with red feathers on his helmet and gold epaulets. Not counting very heavily on the strength of royal forces, the whites living here have organized their own militia, which has already proved its usefulness once. In 1852, a gang of sailors from whaling ships captured the town and started rioting. The King did not dare take decisive measures for fear that some Americans might get killed, making his government responsible for their deaths to the government of the United States. The citizens (whites) took the matter in their own hands and in one day restored order in the town.

But what was the reason for the gathering this time? A navigation officer on one of the merchant ships returned aboard ship not quite sober. The sailor serving his supper was somewhat slow and the officer hit him with such strength that the fellow fell off the ship's ladder and was badly hurt. The drunk still continued to hit and kick him and the sailor died as a result of the beating. The affair was submitted to a jury. The navigator was sentenced only to a hundred dollar fine to be paid to the wife of the victim, a sentence which satisfied her. But everyone, from the King down, was dissatisfied by such an ending to the affair. Just then a *kanaka* had been executed, and two others (a *kanaka* and a Chinese) were condemned to be hanged. The light sentence of the white man incensed everybody. Proclamations appeared in the streets calling *kanakas* to Honolulu from the outside islands in order to organize a council and decide what was to be done, since there was no justice. It seemed that the existing law was not the same for everyone: for the whites it was weak and lenient, for the *kanakas* it was unwavering and harsh despite the fact that the constitution gave them equal rights before the law. In view of this protest, the whites also intended to bare their claws. A few days after the calling of the troops which we witnessed, armed citizens marched in formation through the streets wishing to intimidate the inhabitants. The government remained calm and did not order any investigation, knowing full well that *kanakas* by nature lack the energy necessary for a strong reaction.

There has never been as much crime in the Sandwich Islands as during the current year. During the past ten years there was only one

execution. This year three men have already been condemned to death, and all of them for murder.

I had never witnessed an execution and therefore was rushing around to obtain permission to go inside the prison yard where the scaffold was erected. The sheriff, to whom I addressed my request, replied in a courteous note that since he had refused to grant permission to many others before me he did not feel he had the right to make an exception in my case. It could not be helped. However, I learned that the execution could be watched from the roof of one of the nearest houses and climbed there around seven o'clock in the morning armed with a long telescope.

It was a beautiful morning. Fleecy clouds were lifting from the surrounding mountains, the morning mist spread a transparent cover over Diamond Head point, while palm groves with their swaying treetops stood out brightly against the hazy background. A ship was approaching, and the local inhabitants could recognize the mail boat coming in from San Francisco. Some expected news, bearing good or bad tidings. Only one of them, the criminal, probably did not give any thought to the approaching ship. The solitary fortress stood somberly in the large yard surrounded by a high wall. The scaffold could be seen above the wall. It held two posts with a cross bar. "Das is der Galgen" ["That is the gallows"], explained the man next to me, that same German gentleman whom I described earlier on the day of our arrival in Honolulu. People who had climbed onto the neighboring huts and houses surrounded the wall. The roofs became mottled with a colorful crowd. In the street many people were on horseback, some in carriages—color, noise, and commotion as if on a holiday. Beyond the fortress were visible distant hills and valleys enveloped in mist and lit by the morning rays of the sun. They appeared just as attractive and joyful as the day before and looking at them it seemed that there is no sorrow or trouble on earth. What were the thoughts and feelings at that moment of the man concealed within the gloomy walls of the fortress, the man who was being awaited by the gathering crowd, for whom the tall scaffold had been erected? From where we were we could hear eight bells go off on our clipper. Now four soldiers wearing red coats came out of the black door and took up positions at the four corners of the scaffold. Another oppressive five minutes went by. How did these five minutes seem to the condemned? "Watch, a white figure will appear, that is the criminal", said my neighbor. I did not take my eyes away from the telescope. The four red figures stood motionless at each corner, and the eyes of all those present were staring into the abyss of the open door. The waiting was oppressive. But now, at last, the pastor in black garb with a white

collar appeared and took his position; he was followed by a figure swathed in a white loose garment, walking firmly; then came the executioner. A white rope flashed over the cross bar. The pastor's prayer continued perhaps for one and a half minutes, but to us time seemed beyond calculation. Suddenly the white figure disappeared from the scaffold. All one could see was the taut white rope, and the pastor walking quickly away from the scaffold. Surely the thought that he had been present at an evil deed crossed his mind. The red uniformed soldiers stood motionless. "Finita la comedia!" someone said next to me. More than one heart, at that moment, was overflowing and beating with anger and bitterness. The noisy, bright-colored crowd was still standing around. The mist was dispersing, a steamer in the harbor was letting out smoke preparing to go out to meet the mail boat. I returned to the clipper from which the fortress was also visible. The red clad soldiers were standing at ease. The white rope, which the mariners' eyes recognized from a distance to be Manila line, taut like a violin string stood out clearly from the black posts. On the clipper that day we were celebrating Christmas.<sup>25</sup> Everyone was in dress uniform. Multicolored flags were being prepared on the halyards for the celebration. I felt out of sorts and in my thoughts was grateful to the sheriff for not letting me enter the courtyard—the impression would have been much too strong!

But let us leave the city and have a look at the suburbs. Of these, the most remarkable are the small village of Waikiki, the Ewa plain by Pearl River, and the Pali precipice. Anyone who has seen these places has seen the entire island of Oahu, which, of all the islands in this group, is least distinguished for its vegetation. Its mountains appear naked and sometimes one goes a long distance without seeing any other greenery, except for cactus bushes that grow in sandy areas. The charm of the island is hidden in canyons and around springs. In a carriage one cannot go very far out of town. It is better to hire riding horses of which there are very many good ones in Honolulu.

Waikiki is a very small village, in which the houses are scattered throughout the palm groves that grow along the sea shore, almost at the very foot of Diamond Head. The road leading there first passes through some vacant land, then curves around a most attractive little farm concealed by a garden of bananas, pandanus, and palms, where the rush-covered roofs of kanaka huts are frequently glimpsed in the shade of the trees. Then the road passes through swamp land which resembles our Russian landscape, with patches of growth and a raft to push oneself across to the other side, and with a multitude of many varieties of game birds. Now we come to a large lake. Small boys are splashing around

while trying to bathe a horse that they had dragged into the mud. The horse is leaping about on the shallow and uneven bottom, while a sharp dark-eyed youngster manages to mount it, to the great annoyance of the others who were not fast enough to get ahead of him. Familiar scenes! Only an occasional palm stretching upward or the long drooping leaves of the pandanus give this a unique local imprint. Slender palm trunks appear more frequently to the right and left of us. The road has entered the palm grove, making an attempt to proceed in a straight line and form a regular lane, but soon it has to curve like a snake, circumventing thickets of palm trees which refuse to give way. Small houses scattered individually throughout the grove comprise the village of Waikiki. The houses come right down to the sea, which laps gently against the sandy beach, having tamed the ferocity of its waves on the reefs that protect the island on all sides. The small house of Kamehameha I is pointed out nearby. This was his residence after he conquered Oahu. Former by voyagers used to anchor here beyond the reefs in an outside roadstead.

The *kanakas* whom we encountered were in holiday attire. The new smocks of the women were bedecked with clusters of pretty leaves and their heads were almost bent under the weight of flower wreaths. It was a holiday. We stopped by the largest building, which was filled with people. Table cloths were spread on the floor and huge gourds (called calabashes here), filled with a variety of foods, stood on them. Each family sat in clusters around the repast while large quantities of flowers and greenery carpeted the floor. Soon a figure, easily recognized as that of a pastor, appeared and began to preach. Only at that point did we realize that we had stumbled into a church and then discovered the pulpit and a crucifix. The sermon ended, everyone uncovered his calabash, and the feast began. The dishes included suckling pig steamed in banana leaves between hot rocks (I shall describe the process later) and *poi*, a kind of gruel made of taro, sometimes with coconut; in the latter case it is called white *poi* and is considered a dessert. It is picked up with one's finger. Because it is semi-liquid, one requires special skill to retain a sufficient amount on one's finger. To achieve this, slight circular motions are made in the air with the finger, which is then quickly brought to one's mouth. The very cute young *kanaka* girls at the gathering ate their *poi* in the same manner, without losing any of their grace in the process. All one has to do is to forget some of one's prejudices for a while and everything will appear natural.

There was a school near the church, and school children of both sexes also took part in the festivities, having decorated their little heads with

leaves, flowers, and yellow beads made of young coconut buds. They are a beautiful yellow color, with a strong aroma resembling patchouly.

The ruins of an ancient morai—a place of refuge—are located near Waikiki. This seems to be the only remnant of idol worship on the entire island, but a traveler will not see anything there beyond some rocks overgrown with grass.

Returning into town we rode up Punch Bowl, a hill right above the town. Its flat top is shaped exactly like a round bowl, hence its name. The edges of the flat top rise in separate elevations, forming natural parapets for gun emplacements. A small house has been built on one of these elevations and there is a flagstaff from which the Hawaiian eight colored [*sic*] flag waves. The view of the town from Punch Bowl is spectacular. One side is exposed to the sea, with its sandbars and reefs which break the surface in varying yellow patches; on the other side, distant mountains are drawn in the most delicate of shades. A variety of green squares surround the town with its white houses, palms, streams, churches, masts—everything fitted neatly into the well arranged panorama that constantly changes its shading as the clouds descending from the heights either burst into heavy rain or are pierced by a cascade of bright sun rays.

Ewa Plain lies on the shores of the Pearl River, which falls into the sea in widespread estuaries that barely show their banks. Several lakes with their bright masses increase the apparent number of these flooded areas. We had to ride some twenty *versts* to reach the green plains with their plantations and farms adjoining the river. The road led along the bare slopes of the hills, with sun-parched spots on which cacti and aloe, the only vegetation that could grow under such conditions, stood out in blue-gray patches. A sharp contrast was offered by the ravines, several of which we had to cross. Here the mountain springs followed their picturesque path toward the sea.

Here is the Manua-roa valley. I wonder whether it got its name from the famous mountain on the Island of Hawaii, the highest in all of Polynesia and equal to the Tenerife peak.<sup>26</sup> This valley contained everything that contributes to the beauty of a landscape—there were clusters of palm trees waving over huts in front of which leisurely sat entire families, their knees wrapped in bright-colored shawls, and herds of oxen pasturing in succulent grass near a stream. The stream, after making several graceful curves, moved the noisy wheels of a water mill that hung by a cliff, and watered the banana gardens, a small lawn, and a thick cluster of some bushes from which appeared bunches of flowers, and some sharply outlined branches of heavy leaves hanging over a

half-ruined fence. The road itself seemed to be reluctant to leave the ravine too soon, but instead wound around each little garden, each farmstead, and emerged after several turns at the rocky walls of the ravine. In the Ewa Plain we had to take a rest. We rode up to a solitary hut where several horses were tethered. The inside of the hut was not different from any of the others: wooden dishes stacked in the corners, hanging and standing calabashes, bunches of bananas and matting. In the middle of the hut sat a wrinkled old woman in tatters, with disheveled gray hair, the very image of Megaera. Two *kanaka* men and a young girl stood motionless around her. No one paid any attention to us, only the old woman shot a snake-like glance in our direction. This stone-like group gave us the shivers and we rode on. Among the banana plantations we soon found one of the inns which here, as elsewhere, nestle in ravines, in mountains, or anywhere a hungry rider might travel. We were not demanding, having decided from the start that we would have to make do with bananas for the rest of the day. But here we found roast beef, ale and vegetables! On the way back we were overtaken by eight or nine amazons and we galloped together for about ten versts. Their bright-colored shawls blew in the wind and this seemed to increase the speed of our gallop.

Now I shall describe the trip to the Pali, where we were promised to be shown "the true" life of the *kanakas*. The road to the Pali leads through a canyon that starts as a valley just outside the town where we had ridden several times. At first forming several hollows, the canyon finally narrows and the gradually ascending valley ends suddenly in a vertical precipice with an 800 foot drop. A historical legend is associated with this place.

Each island of the Hawaiian archipelago belonged at first to different rulers who reigned with absolute despotism. They were given almost divine worship by the people, who were going through a period of complete demoralization and were practicing a monstrous religion of worshipping humans. The land was divided among chiefs of different groups, who were feudal vassals of the chief ruler. All the blessings of the land were reserved for the higher chiefs. There were neither laws, nor judges to protect the rights of the common people, and the mighty word "tabu", signifying prohibition, forbade the use of land, property, hunting, or fishing. One word from the chief settled disputes, his word started war or concluded peace. The common people were completely enslaved.

In the last century, the King of Hawaii, the largest island of the archipelago, decided to unite all these separate, constantly warring



kingdoms, and actually succeeded in conquering the islands one by one. Some of the islands submitted of their own accord, seeing his constantly growing power and influence. Probably the strongest opposition to him was offered here, on the island of Oahu. With the assistance of guns and Vancouver's marines, the king landed in several canoes at Waikiki and began to press the population which was defending its existence and independence. The *kanakas* were fighting for their huts and, furthermore, they were directed by the powerful orders of their chiefs, whom they worshiped like gods.\* But the invincible conqueror, Kamehameha I, attacked with energy. The *kanakas* huddled in the canyon, defending each step, leaving every bush, every rock covered with their blood. Finally, there was no more room to retreat. The canyon led to a terrible cliff with a thick forest at its depth, and beyond it the sea tearing over reefs and rocks toward the shore. There were only two choices left: either to surrender or to hurl oneself over the cliff. The *kanakas* chose the latter, and surrendered the island only after all of them to the last man hurled themselves from the precipice, sowing the green woods below with their bones. Kamehameha became ruler of Oahu, selecting the tiny village of Waikiki as his residence.

In addition to martial astuteness, Kamehameha I had remarkable administrative ability. His keen mind was full of ideas concerning the complete renaissance of the country, and he considered that single rule was the first step toward that. He divided all the conquered lands among his chiefs, retaining for himself the greatest portion. His chief advisor and best friend was John Young, who was left behind by Vancouver. Kamehameha wore European clothing and would have been completely satisfied had he been able to witness the results of what he had started. The Sandwich Islands began to lose their native aspect only during the reign of Kamehameha III, when government property was created from small parcels of land taken from individual holdings to provide revenue to satisfy government needs. When the European form of government was adopted, each *kanaka* became a free man and received under the law equal rights with the princes.

The upheaval was initiated by the powerful personality of Kamehameha I, rightly called Peter the Great of Polynesia. Time and the

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\* To this day the *kanaka* character reveals traces of this type of worship. Today he is a free man, and the remaining chiefs have no power; but if, for instance, a chief should ask a common *kanaka* to hide some money for him, he will guard the treasure entrusted to him day and night. But should anyone else, not a chief, try to do the same, the *kanaka* will be the first to steal it. How great, then, was this devotion during the heyday of these chiefs and princes!



influence of Europeans did the rest. The personality of Kamehameha III was insignificant. He was a toy in the hands of the people who surrounded him, but nevertheless the period of his reign marks an epoch in the history of the kingdom. A liberal constitution was framed in his day, Christianity was definitely accepted as the dominant religion, the tabu was abolished, a parliament was instituted. Trial by jury, a regular army and police, and regular customs collection (which constitutes the main revenue of the government) were established. During his reign the fertile land of the islands (primarily on the island of Maui) was developed into coffee, sugar, indigo, and arrowroot plantations. In short, it was during his reign that a government based on liberal and modern principles was formed. This government is not at all a travesty. A place where fifty years ago there were human sacrifices, where the population existed only to satisfy daily needs, where nothing mattered besides war and bacchanalian dances, now boasts 500 schools for 70,000 inhabitants. We were far from any idea of mockery, when we visited clean orphanages where little savages have learned to be people.

A moral revolution has taken place, but the question remains—are the people strong enough physically to maintain it. Civilization was acquired at great cost! New diseases appeared: colds resulting from wearing unaccustomed clothing, and various other ailments arising from a new mode of living which weakened the health. The population is decreasing visibly in spite of the growing well being. A strange and incomprehensible phenomenon that baffles all observers.\*

At 7 o'clock in the morning we started in a large cavalcade toward the head of the canyon. Midway we stopped to have another look at the small house of Kamehameha I and at his royal bath house. The bath house was indeed royal. A large cascade fell 150 feet down into the depth of an extinct crater, that appeared to us like a circular arena with sheer walls. Banana and orange trees grew at the bottom of the arena and along the streams spreading from the waterfall. Water gurgled and splashed, the drops sparkling like diamonds, and scattered a damp mist over the trees and bushes that bent over the waterfall. Above it stood the

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\* There is only one 8-bed hospital in Honolulu for the *kanakas*. Every day some twenty people come for consultation and the doctor in charge, Mr. Hillebrand, told me that many *kanakas* suffering from chronic illnesses were completely cured after giving serious attention to them. A large hospital with greater facilities would have a salutary influence on general health. Everyone is aware of this. During our sojourn it was decided to build a new 150-bed hospital and the location had already been selected. When this is accomplished, men of good will can celebrate a great victory, seeing that perhaps a whole generation will have been snatched from the jaws of death.

mountains with their severe contours and dark shadows covered with forest. It would be difficult to arrange a better bath house! Along the road, sometimes rocky, sometimes sandy, stood a few scattered huts clinging now to a cluster of trees, now to a bare rock. Here and there one could discern the contrasting red shawls of the women sitting on their door steps.

But now the canyon narrows down; a strong gust of wind tears the hat off one's head. The northeast trade winds, which acquire a tremendous force in this narrow passage, were breaking through the rocky gateway. We dismounted and carefully approached the edge of the precipice. It was frightening, but at the same time we were astounded by the panorama that suddenly opened up to us. Sheer cliffs rose to the right and to the left of us. Two mountain ridges, which at first were parallel and formed the canyon, suddenly spread out into a wide circle encompassing the valley down below between their two wide-spread sides and continued on in irregular masses of rock, ledges, and hills toward the sea, which sparkled and displayed its fanciful colors at a distance. Approaching these shores the sea had abandoned its perpetual cold appearance, which it is in the habit of exposing to us sailors. Here it donned variegated, coquettish hues, skipped over several rows of reefs in white splashes, and entered the bays at the foot of the landscape, appearing now as a yellowish shallow, now a sparkling bright blue over a calm stretch, now hitting some protruding rock with a milky white foam.

Recalling the legend, one is afraid to look down. The vegetation below is thick, appearing to form an impenetrable green velvet carpet. On the left the sheer cliffs, which extend far into the distance, descend into the valley in green slopes, as if nature, not wishing to have bare rock face the valley, had purposely thrown a generous covering of trees and bushes onto the steep cliff sides and had smoothed the transition from wild rock to the pleasant slopes of the valley decorated with a fanciful variety of growth. A hut was visible on one of the hills with a few palm trees surrounding it like a candelabra. That hut was the object of our outing.

The descent into the valley was in zig-zags down a sheer cliff. The road, cutting into the rock, wound along the cliff edges. It was wild, but very picturesque. The view changed at each turn: now we faced inaccessible walls of rock, now the blue sea sparkled in the distance, now it was replaced by luxurious growth. As we descended, the cliffs grew in stature and pressed down on us, while the trees which had appeared as a green carpet from above, now stood above our heads.

The hut which we finally reached was decorated in *kanaka* style. The walls, the ceiling, and the posts were all covered with flowers and leaves. A *kanaka* dinner was cooking near the hut. Several girls in festive clothing with flower wreaths on their heads were awaiting us in order to carry us back with their songs and dancing to the time when Kamehameha I had not yet conquered Oahu and people lived according to their natural instincts.

*Kanaka* cooking is rather interesting. Some rocks are thrown into a small pit and are heated by a fire built over them. A cleaned suckling pig is laid over the hot rocks and is covered with banana leaves, which are then covered with several layers of matting. In half an hour<sup>27</sup> the roast is ready. It is amazingly tasty, saturated with the aroma and freshness of the leaves. After dinner the women sang, accompanying their wild cries with amazingly expressive gestures.

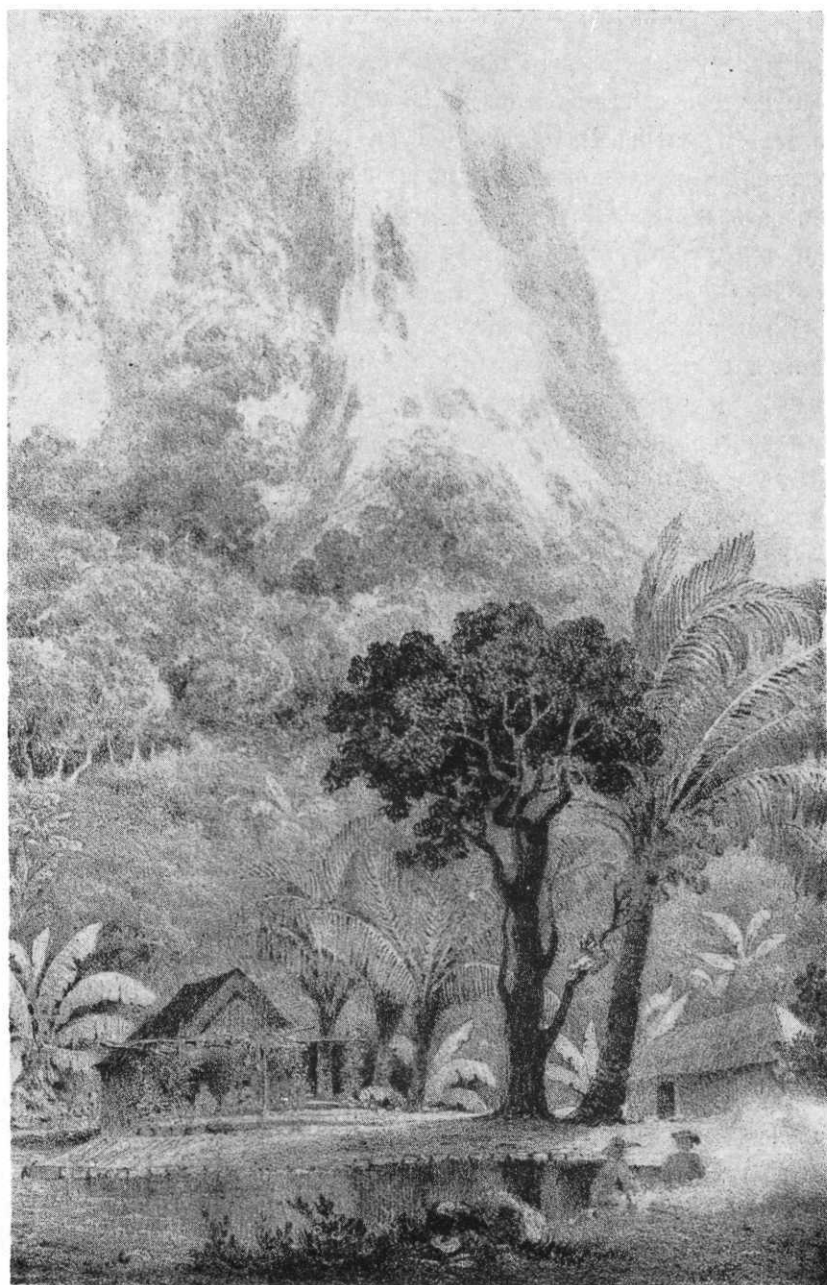
The ascent up the mountain was much harder than the descent. The well trained horses clung to the rocks with great difficulty and stumbled frequently. At the top, cooled by a current of strong wind, we rested for a while and returned to town by nightfall.

One might say that singing and dancing are a specialty of the local population. There are women who only sing and others who only dance. Each of the dances have their special performers. The singers arrange themselves in a circle, cover their legs with a large bright-colored shawl and hold their special instruments—a gourd filled with small balls that roll around inside, and with a collar at the top bordered with feathers and decorated with copper nails and pieces of foil. Each singer holds such a tambourine in her hands. Keeping time, they hit their knees in unison with it, shake it in the air and move it about producing a deafening rattle. At the same time, to the accompaniment of these motions they utter the refrains of their cacophonic songs. As the movements of the dancers become faster, the entire body takes part in the dance, each member making a separate motion as if stung by some annoying insect and wishing to get rid of it. The crashing noise of their instruments has its own savage harmony that matches the women's expressive grimaces very well, while snatches of song fly out from their thick lips and sparks scatter from their dark eloquent eyes.

The dancing is more distinctive than the songs. The helpful William Fluger<sup>28</sup> had arranged for us a *hula-hula en grand*, having summoned the

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"Oahu." (Pali hut). From V. A. Vysheslavitsev, *Ocherki perom i karandashom iz krugosvetnogo plavaniya v 1857, 1858, 1859 i 1860 godakh*, 2d ed. (St. Petersburg: Wolf, 1867), opposite p. 404. Bishop Museum Photo.





best dancers of the islands. These dances are forbidden and were for a long time the object of missionary persecution. But dancing has become so much a part of the flesh and blood of the *kanakas*, that it seems they could not exist without their hula-hula. Into all their songs they incorporate with gestures the main theme of that dance. As an exception, the government occasionally allows a performance of hula-hula, but on condition that the women wear clothing, and a tax of eleven dollars is paid for each dance.

Outside of town, in a specially constructed tent made of palm fronds, surrounded by a crowd that had gathered to watch their beloved dance, we admired this unique ballet, more luxurious both in its originality and surroundings than all our Giselles and Esmeraldas. The natives said that they had not seen such a hula-hula for a long time.

One by one, in slow motion, eight dancers crept rather than walked in. There were wreaths on their heads, and they wore knee-length dresses. On their ankles they had a sort of bracelet made of flowers and strings of dog teeth. They danced to the sound of two sticks hit against each other. The performers using this simple instrument, sang and gesticulated. This dance was very modest and restrained. When anyone among us wanted to give money to the dancers, it was handed to a young *kanaka*, who presented it to each dancer, kissing each in turn. The kiss was given by rubbing his nose against the nose of the beauty, from whose face, as well as his own, he first flicked off the dust with a kerchief. Each place has its customs!

The musicians and the dancers left. Their place was taken by a different orchestra in which each musician had two drums, a small one and a large one. The small drum was hit with a flexible thin rod, the large one with the palm of the hand and fingers. As soon as they intoned their song full of guttural sounds, three tall *kanaka* girls appeared on the carpet of green leaves that covered the tent floor. The middle dancer was rather large and strikingly attractive. The dance was full of voluptuousness and passionate, savage abandon. Now each part of the lithe body expressed a kind of lazy motion full of languor, now, in a sudden outburst of rapture, the young women would shake all over. With her outstretched arm she would point to someone among the spectators, as if wishing to convey all the passion of her unchaste ecstasy in the expression of her eyes and the thrust of her body.

For the third hula-hula the musicians held large empty gourds, the dull sound of which somehow particularly suited the varied poses of this final dance. Many missionaries have expressed loud indignation against the immorality of the bacchanalian performances; but we, on



the contrary, would be very sorry if the *kanaka* women, in acquiring new habits, would lose the magical charm of their old naive hula-hula.

On our last day in Honolulu we were presented to the King. All the officers of our squadron first went to "government house" to find Wyllie. There was a gold crown on the gate with several small cabin-like houses on the grounds. One of them held the Ministry of Finance, another housed the Ministry of Education, a third held the Ministry of Interior. At the very end of the courtyard was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where we found Wyllie. All the walls of the single room housing the ministry were lined with books, and there were piles of papers in the corners and on the tables. Piles of papers were lying on the floor. Wyllie presided amidst all this in his dress uniform and blue ribbon decoration. We went with him to the palace. The regiment was lined up in the large courtyard beating the drums while a new flag was flying from the flagstaff. The palace consists of several large high ceilinged rooms, luxuriously furnished. Beautiful rugs lay on the floor, damask drapes hung on the windows, and the furniture was also upholstered in red damask. All the outstanding personalities were in the reception hall. Among them I recognized Mr. Bischoff and General Matai. All were in full dress, some wearing decorations and ribbons, some in the uniform of generals.

After about a five minute wait we were taken to the throne room. In the middle, on a raised platform stood a couch instead of a throne. Next to it, wearing the uniform of the National Guard and white gloves, stood King Kamehameha IV, a tall handsome man, who looked about thirty-five years old, with a certain sad expression in his large dark eyes. I have noticed this expression among many *kanakas* of noble origin. It seemed as if some sort of inner trouble, some sorrow, was gnawing at them and they had no power to overcome it, so that only complete submission to fate made life bearable. It seemed to me that on the face of this ruler of the people I read the fate of his entire nation which was fading and dissolving without a murmur. But where to find the energy, where to gather the strength to throw off the chains imposed by merciless destiny? And above all—where to find the answer to the question: what is to be done? Who will provide the cure to the gnawing ailment? Or is it incurable, fatal, and the leaders of the people know it? I looked at these eyes full of sadness and somehow I felt frightened! The manners of the King are those of a perfect gentleman, and he enjoys universal love and respect.

Our company commander presented all of us to him in turn. When the audience was over, we signed our names in the book and wandered off

into the courtyard. We were shown the famous royal cape, made of the feathers of a most rare bird. It took several decades, if not hundreds of years, to make this cape because only two feathers of each bird can be used. The King's study is lined with books. Several portraits hang on the walls, among which the most striking is that of Kamehameha I<sup>29</sup> with his intelligent and unique personality.

## II. TAHITI

After visiting Tahiti I regret that we no longer live in the past century. In the good old days one could talk about one's sentimental infatuations without being accused of exaggeration or lack of objectivity. No one would demand the restraint expected in our times. Today no one cares about your joys or your sorrows. All that they expect of you are positive facts, business reports, figures—even though this can hardly be demanded of a man who has spent two weeks in Tahiti. Therefore, for the time being I renounce the XIX Century and imagine myself in a silk coat, a powdered wig, and patent leather shoes with red heels. I observe and describe in the guise of an XVIII-Century man.

Had I accompanied Bougainville on his round-the-world voyage, I would have started my letter thus:

Have you ever been to an art gallery full of works by great masters, where you do not know what to look at first, what to admire? You are dazzled, you cannot concentrate either on the divine face of Raphael's Madonna, nor on the expressive eyes of Murillo's Peasant Boy, nor on the transparent body of Rubens' Susanna, or Ruysdael's peaceful forests. You tear yourself away from one overwhelming impression and are immediately astounded and delighted by a new one! Soon you are exhausted, you keep trying to admire in vain and realize with consternation that you are powerless . . . powerless to absorb at once all the upsurging and rapturous impressions. . . .

Flicking the snuff off my lace ruffles with a handkerchief, I adjust my powdered wig and continue:

Our feelings were akin to that sensation when we found ourselves in Tahiti, a country that actually *astounds* a voyager by its beauty. Some of us immediately became lost in a whirl of enchantment, like the amateur dilettantes who superficially rush through an art gallery accepting without question any passing pleasure. Others slowed down and contemplated with disbelief the charming bays bordered with garlands of palm trees, or the southern sky with its sparkling stars above. These observers, becoming infatuated little by little, finally succumbed to the general impression. Confirmed pessimists, without a word, and hardly aware of it themselves, changed their outlook and suddenly, for no apparent reason would spend hours on end sitting at night under the palms, without giving any thought as to why they abandoned their old habits. Tahiti affected everyone like an absolutely perfect beauty. A young man would fall in ecstasy at her feet, frankly expressing the feelings which overflowed his young heart, feelings that now burst forth in a wild flow of words, now in disconnected utterances which reflected

his youth responding to the call of beauty. An old man would smile and bow his grizzled head in acquiescence. An indifferent man would pause, look more carefully, and admit that he was observing something new, something he had never experienced before, and feel that he was beginning to give in little by little. . . .

Bougainville's fellow traveler would have remained in his unrestrained admiration, but the XIX Century voyager was confronted at the entrance to the beauty's boudoir on the island of Tahiti by the French colony, whose soldiers were dressed—to mark the arrival of the Russian squadron—in woolen uniforms with cotton epaulets, waving tricolored flags. This was a colony with cheap bars, with missionaries, with boasting, buffoonery, commercialism, slovenliness, bugles at reveille, drums, and a complete unawareness of the environment. No matter how hard the nearby trees tried to conceal, with their branches and large leaves, the sickly growth of this rubble of civilization, with its tiny box-like houses and pretensions at architecture, the colony stood out like a stain insolently upsetting the general harmony, a dirty stain on the spotlessly clean garb of the bride.

During our entire passage from the Sandwich Islands to Tahiti there were no strong winds, nor a single squall to disturb the tranquility of our sailing with some unpleasant surprise such as a broken mast or a torn sail. At the equator, which we crossed now for the third time, we were not becalmed for a single moment, and the SE trades, as if out of consideration, kept holding E so as to be as helpful and as favorable as possible. At nightfall we spotted land, almost completely concealed by clouds. Toward morning rain thinned out the clouds and the peaks of the island were revealed. Then the entire mass of clouds seemed to divide in half and through the break that was formed appeared a diadem—a rock, which by its whimsical shape resembled a crown with sharp prongs on top. Green groves could be seen on the shore at water's edge. They formed promintories that jutted forth overtaking each other and then retreating to crowd closely together around small inlets and bays. Myriads of madrepores have formed an impenetrable wall surrounding Tahiti and with their coral formations stop the surging sea as if preventing its rough waves from spoiling the luxurious girdle of palm trees which encircle the island. But the waves seeth and foam and break into a splashing and irregular surf. At the feet of the beauty protected by this rocky wall, inside the rows of reefs, the sea is calm and still; like a mirror, it reflects the magic image with all the details of its beauty and charm.

A sailboat appeared in the white surf—it was the pilot. He nimbly climbed onto our clipper and settled himself on the bowsprit, pointing with his arm the direction to steer and how to avoid the underwater

rocks and the reef. Now the surf which had been foaming ahead of us was roaring on both sides of the ship, but this was not the first vessel for the pilot to lead between this Scilla and Charybdis. We approached the roadstead which is guarded from the sea by a palm-covered islet. A border of palms winding around the bay is intermingled with small houses, breadfruit trees, huts, flowers, while the brightly colored dresses of *kanaka* women flash between the trees and along the embankment. Hills, shining with bright foliage, rise above the border. Beyond them are dark ravines, but the groves and bushes decorating them soften their sombre and severe appearance. Everything here is joyful, bright, and gay!

The island of Tahiti was discovered by Wallis in 1767. A year later it was visited by Bougainville whose enthusiastic description of "The New Cytera" is well known. A few years later [1769] Cook visited Tahiti and his severe and gloomy personality was somewhat softened under the influence of the magic nature of the island. Cook stayed here longer than he had expected and his precise and compressed style becomes smoother and gentler when he writes about the women of Tahiti. Cook returned to Tahiti three times. During that period occurred the famous event related so many times in prose and verse. I am referring to the sloop *Bounty* whose crew rebelled under the leadership of [Fletcher] Christian. The captain [Bligh] was seized and put in a boat with a few men who had remained loyal to him; they were given a compass, some provisions and put to sea. The boat safely reached Sydney.<sup>30</sup> The mutineers did not know what to do with the ship. Opinions were divided, forming two parties. Stuart and Heywood disembarked at Tahiti, while Christian, thinking that he was not out of danger, sailed with the other party hoping to find some uninhabited island. It is well known, how they settled on Pitcairn Island where almost all of them perished as a result of continual feuding, how only John Adams remained with the children and women, and how he repented and determined to make amends for his crimes before God and his conscience by establishing high morals and labor as the foundation of the colony, where he now is the sole leader. A family of moral people was brought up in the midst of the ocean astonishing all navigators who come upon it by accident.

The first missionaries came to Tahiti from London with Captain Wilson in 1797. Pomare was king then and he received them very well. The Tahitian religion was fetishism with the deities Taoroa, Oro, and Manua playing the most significant roles. The missionaries found some analogy between these three deities and the Holy Trinity, presumably attempting at first to adjust their teaching to the native beliefs. Numerous

lower deities, gods of the sea, of the shark, of the air, of fire, and so on, were subordinate to the three superior deities. Idols were crudely carved from casuarina wood and wrapped in pieces of tapa.<sup>31</sup> They had power only when they spoke through the voices of the high priests. The shrines, called *marais*, were places fenced in by rocks. Trees surrounding the *marais* were considered sacred. Worship consisted of prayers and sacrifices. Sacrificial offerings were fruit, pigs, birds, and in time of war, humans. The priest's position was hereditary and he was considered equal to chiefs in status. This is what the English missionaries found on Tahiti and what they had to struggle against.

Deceived by the apparent tolerance of the natives, they thought that they could attain success very easily; and it was true that they were readily obeyed and that the natives learned various trades willingly. The preaching against infanticide did not undermine right away the influence of the chiefs who had no intention to lose it. Nevertheless, new ideas led to discontent and as a result dissention flared up. It continued until the death of Pomare I who was succeeded by Pomare II. For several years running, Tahiti was in terrible turmoil. It was necessary to protect the god Oro whose sanctity was being attacked on all sides. In order to propitiate him and make him demonstrate his power, thousands were being slaughtered as a sacrifice to him! The missionaries removed themselves to the island of Eimeo [Moorea] where Pomare, overthrown and deprived of his rule, soon followed them. In his unfortunate state he began to doubt Oro's power and the missionary Nott took advantage of that. He promised Pomare victory in the name of the new God and called on several English ships anchored in the harbor for assistance. Pomare was baptized by Nott and officially broke the last of the tabus. Soon the entire island of Eimeo wanted to be baptized and Nott sent for assistants.

Tahiti remained for a long time a scene of horrible disorders, but there too people came to their senses. They began to regret the absence of Pomare and decided to call him back. Pomare returned, but it took at least three years to conquer the island entirely, which occurred only in 1815.

In the meantime, Christianity was spreading successfully, and the first church was erected on Eimeo. The chiefs repudiated the idols and burned them personally. New missionaries arrived from Sydney. Ellis brought a printing press, and innumerable copies of the New and Old Testament appeared on the island. The people were affected not so much by truly religious feelings as by a passion for innovation. Everyone

wanted to own a copy of the Bible, and to obtain one people even came from the neighboring islands.

Ecstatic over his success, Pomare became an inveterate drunkard. He got drunk every day and as he became inebriated he would gradually lose control of his senses and frequently would be heard muttering: "Well, Pomare, now your pig is more capable than you are to govern your kingdom!" He died in 1821.

With his death the influence of the missionaries came to an end. His heir, who had been brought up by them according to their beliefs, was crowned with great solemnity in 1824, but died three years later. Pomare Vahiné and Aimata Pomare, the two women into whose hands the reign fell, barely tolerated the distasteful yoke of the missionaries and constantly protested against their teaching. The court of the last queen became the gathering place for people who wished to free themselves from the strict demands and supervision of the missionaries. The queen surrounded herself with young men and young girls. Life at court was spent in festivities, immodest dances and suggestive songs. The missionaries put up with it against their will, because they could not do anything about the queen. Finally, the *Mamaia* sect was organized, which wanted to reconcile the Christian generation with the demands of the flesh. This sect, among other things, approved of free intercourse between sexes using King Solomon as an example, and spread so rapidly, that it seems today to be the predominant sect on the island.

Noting how the Protestants were gaining followers in a still unknown part of the world, Catholics could not remain indifferent for long, and so MM. de Pompalier, Carré, and Laval left Paris. The two latter were disembarked on Gambier island [at Mangareva] where very soon indeed the savage inhabitants became Catholic; that is they began to attend schools, wear clothing, sing hymns, and develop a cough.

In 1836 the two missionaries appeared in Papeete. Prichard, the head of the Protestants and also British consul, whether out of religious jealousy or for some other personal reasons, surrounded the house of the new apostles and forced them to leave the island. Just then, however, several French warships were cruising the South Pacific. Dumont D'Urville, Du Petit-Thouars, and Laplace appeared in Papeete one after another. They demanded an audience with the Queen, signed treaties with the help of guns and definitely took the island under their protection, assuring, of course, the predominance of Catholicism. In Europe the Prichard affair ended peacefully. Robert Peel and Guizot smoothed it over diplomatically, while the French, having searched for so long to find a place in the South Pacific, decided to occupy Tahiti on



the justification that the English had occupied New Zealand. Queen Pomare, who had almost completely lost her influence, was allowed to reign, while the French took the rule in their own hands.

But while the English capitalists are extracting millions from New Zealand, Tahiti to this day remains a worthless investment for the French. To this day there is not a trace of efficient colonization. The naval officers who are always appointed administrators of the colony are replaced frequently and as a result do not accomplish very much. At present, Tahiti trades only in oranges, which are exported to San Francisco. Yet the lush nature of the island produces sugar, coffee, indigo, vanilla, cotton, and many valuable trees, so that, if the island were in the hands of efficient colonizers, it would make them very rich.

The town of Papeete was named after the bay around which it is located. It consists of several streets with houses half hidden in the shade of breadfruit trees and palms. The buildings fronting the street all look official. They are all either barracks, or engineering administration, or public works offices. Flags wave from the roofs, guards patrol the entrances. The Admiralty, almost completely concealed by palm trees, is located on a long sandy spit leading right down to the sea. There are very few shops, and everything looks temporary, as if it is there by accident. In the streets one encounters soldiers in their woolen coats and their flattened caps, all of whom are blond, blue-eyed, and pale. They somehow give the impression not of living beings, but of some sort of disease grafted onto a healthy organism, so pale and puny are they in comparison with the handsome, vivacious population of Tahiti. Everything that has not been brought here or made by the French spreads beautifully and luxuriously. How well suited are the rush huts to the dark green leaves of the breadfruit trees, and how commonplace and disruptive of this harmony are the houses resembling in their shape a trunk surmounted by a so-called belvedere!

Just look at that French woman walking along the street: she brought with her the hat and coat and is convinced of her immeasurable superiority over the *kanaka* girl who walks behind her bedecked with leaves and flowers. . . . But is any comparison between the two possible? One is the child of nature, pure and unspoilt; the other, along with her hat and coat, is the latest import, a product of civilization, artificial, false, exhausted. God blessed these islands by not giving them a single poisonous insect, a single predatory animal; then suddenly a swarm of locusts inundated these children of nature, who had been living face to face with it in complete harmony. Here are the missionaries in their black seminary cassocks. Here are their assistants—the Sisters of Mercy.

Where ever did they find such obese old women with their hooded capes, aprons, and layers of clothing?

Disturbed by the sight of all these people and the town with everything pertaining to it, one's heart becomes lighter as one leaves the town, when its whitewashed buildings are replaced by grass huts with their rush covered roofs. *Kanaka* women wearing long multicolored smocks sit by the hour along the fences. Both the women and the flowers that they use for decoration fit so well the luxurious colors of the breadfruit tree in front of which one stops with a feeling of awe. Its broad cut-out leaves seem to form a bountiful wreath with which mother nature decorated this useful tree so essential to the islanders. Nature has surrounded the native with so many temptations, so many easily obtained pleasures, that one cannot and should not demand of him hard labor or energy. The breadfruit tree, imported by the first settlers from the Malay Islands, has completely taken care of all the essential needs of the *kanakas*. It should be noted that on those islands which do not have it, the population has developed barely above the condition of animals. Cannibalism, physical weakness and underdevelopment, along with low mental capacity are the fate of those unfortunate tribes populating many of the archipelagos of Melanesia. Living only on coconuts and fish, they have never developed that plasticity, which is the main source of physical and moral growth.

Had there been no breadfruit trees in Tahiti, its population also would not have developed into such a healthy and beautiful type. In any event, a native of Tahiti would certainly not need to work; all the conditions surrounding him turn him away from labor. Why should he build a house when a hastily put together grass hut is much more satisfactory? Why should he think about the future of his children when a man can live here without a care in the world and be exactly as free as the birds—he neither has to sow, nor harvest, nor think of the morrow? In such surroundings, of course, native ideas about duties have been formed that have nothing in common with our ideas which the missionaries are so obstinately trying to impose on them. Here, nature and its inhabitants represent the first creation, and the “modern” man should not interfere. At least, one would choose an entirely different type of leaders and tutors for these children of nature. I visited a school established for the *kanaka* children by the Sisters of Mercy. The little dark-eyed *kanaka* girls looked like small animals caught in a cage. “They are very quick to learn”, said the head of the school, “except that *elles n’ont pas de persévérance*. They study only so long as the subject is novel, but as soon as they get tired of it they stop coming to school.” What then

are they taught? First of all, to read and write in French, then geography and needle work. The geography primarily deals with France. In needle work they learn embroidery, making lace, sewing dresses and under-clothing; in household sciences they learn to wash floors, do the laundry, plant vanilla, and so on. From school the native girl returns home to her hut. Why should she know that *la France est bornée au nord par le détroit de la Manche, etc.*? Why should she tack lace which she does not wear, or know how to wash the floor which she does not have in her hut, or learn how to do the laundry, when five times a day she plunges in her dress into the river that flows past her hut, and five times a day she will have time to dry out lying in the sun? But either mercenary ambitions or a dull routine predominate. "At first they were all against me," said the fat headmistress, the reformer of Tahiti, "but I pay no attention to anything and persist in seeking my goal. Gradually the children are beginning to get used to it." Too bad, thought I. It would be much better to set them all free, to stop punishing the children and not commit that morally dreadful sin against which we struggled when attempting to destroy the society of Arioi.<sup>12</sup>

We left town for a few days so as to get away from the sight of the ships, the French, the bars. Mr. Osborn gave us a one-horse cabriolet. We took all the necessary provisions and, among other things, a hammock which we could hang between trees, and while lying in it, contemplate the sky and the stars and not think of anything, at least for the time being. The road led along a flat shore which encircles the island. In spots it came down to the water, sometimes went up into the mountains, ascending hills and descending into ravines and valleys. Now and again it hung over a precipice, at the bottom of which the graceful bay was bordered by palms and other trees which concealed in their shade huts and colorful *kanaka* women. In one corner of the bay a small river hidden by overhanging branches fell into the bay and among the small cascades, which spurted through the rocks, bronzed naiads were splashing in the water and wringing the cooling moisture from their hair.

Guava trees, forming a solid wall of greenery, crowded the road. This tree with its aromatic and tasty fruit has caused much harm in Tahiti, however. Spreading in horrifying quantities it threatens to choke out all other vegetation of the island. Because of the amount of fruit falling from the trees and the seeds scattered around by birds and pigs, it seems that no other plant can possibly compete with it. Like fire, it consumes both grass and small plants, gathering up into its innumerable shoots all the plentiful juices of the blessed soil of the island. If Tahiti had sensible colonizers, they would find some means to stop this evil, but since no

one gives it a thought, the guava trees, like an enemy army, are taking over ravines and climbing up the heights and are spreading over larger and larger areas.

We stopped at Poea village. Do not imagine that this village, like our villages, spreads its huts on both sides of the road. Here, only one hut was visible, and even it was hard to reach through fences, vegetable patches, and banana trees, while one could not even suspect the proximity of other huts. A small river fell into the sea nearby. Near its mouth stood several ironwood trees, their slender hanging needles resembling, at a distance, a thin transparent green veil in which a huge giant had wrapped himself as a protection against the mosquitoes that abound near the river.

It was nightfall when we reached the village. Our guide, Danny, who followed us on horseback, unharnessed the horse and let it graze in the yard. I attached one end of the hammock to a tree, the trunk of which consisted of hundreds of separate trunks completely intertwined among themselves and coming together in a mass of branches and leaves, and I attached the other end to a neighboring tree and stretched out. The hammock swayed gently and I relaxed completely, gazing at the sky where stars began to sparkle and at the palms and the *kanaka* family sitting on the rocks near a fence. A fire was being started at one side where the *kanaka* host was preparing a piglet; he washed it several times, filled it with hot rocks and banana leaves, and then covered it with leaves and mats.

Danny, a handsome fellow about seventeen years of age with curly hair but an apathetic expression on his face, was a metis who had appeared to us to be terribly phlegmatic at first, but now displayed amazing abilities of organization and ingenuity. To our regret, our hosts had already been somewhat contaminated by civilization. Having expected to dine off tapa and banana leaves, we were disappointed to see a table set with plates and forks. The *kanakas*, on the other hand, settled down most picturesquely on the grass and soon prepared the piglet from which we sliced small portions. The hut was lit and several women and children, sitting in a semicircle, sang hymns. We stretched out near them and listened for a long time to the monotonous but true singing of the fresh and loud voices. Savouring the status of tourists, we refused to occupy the beds that had been prepared for us, and remained lying on the tapa mats, a decision we regretted more than once in the course of the night. The floors of the hut were just as uncomfortable as those in the houses of our peasants. In addition to the small jumping creatures, they are also infested with crawling lizards and some sort of snail shells from which a small crab emerges.

We arose before sun up and went to bathe in the nearest river, which was both refreshing and pleasant. You have to picture a warm morning, an early fog hanging over the nearby palm trees and bushes, the freshness of water as clear as crystal, and finally the appearance of the sun. It lit up Eimeo Island, barely visible in the transparent distance, with its whimsical mountain peaks, the surf breaking over the coral reefs, and the veil-like covering of the ironwood trees. The rising sun was accompanied by the increased aroma of the orange and mango groves. We had hardly finished dressing when a man of short stature, in a nankeen cloth coat and sporting a small French beard appeared before us. We attempted to avoid him, but he had already caught us in his net of ceaseless conversation and compliments. From his long speech interspersed with bows and smiles, we finally understood that we were confronted by the butler of Admiral Bruat, who (voluntarily or involuntarily) had settled here for a peaceful life. He was inviting us to visit him and partake of a glass *du kirsch, du cognac, ou du rhum*; without our asking him for it, he drew a detailed plan of the route, mentioned the famous admiral twenty times over, and left us alone only after we finally promised to visit him—which, however, was simply military strategy on our part. The singers of the previous night were awaiting us at the entrance of the hut. They gave us some coconuts, which were opened on the spot, and we enjoyed drinking the fresh, clear, and slightly cool milk.

We proceeded on our way, at first through a continuous forest. To begin with, the difference between a tropical forest and ours is that a tropical forest is extremely varied. When we enter a pine forest at home, it stretches without end; the straight yellow trunks follow you for tens and sometimes hundreds of versts, until your eyes become tired. But here it is quite different. The tree trunks are entangled in knots, intertwined by irregularly shaped climbing branches of plants, which now spread upwards in garlands, now hang down in fringes, bouquets, or stringy lashes. The foliage is also endlessly varied, beginning with the fine spidery leaves of the ironwood trees and the fine microscopic leaf of acacia and ending with the shiny huge oval leaf of the banana and *fei*.<sup>33</sup> Suddenly some breadfruit trees appear with their deeply carved leaves. Then one notices even a larger leaf of a different tree, the trunk of which seems to consist of several trunks and the ever dividing roots seem to be intertwined with roots of the neighboring tree. Next to them is a grove of orange trees, passing through which we have to bend down low to avoid the hard golden fruit. Next to them are the lemon trees, where hundreds of lemons have fallen off, their yellow skins covering

the road and filling the already stuffy and stifling forest air with their heavy aroma. And what undisturbed, sacred silence!

Hills rise above the forest on the left and palm groves climb up along them. At times one can see only their feathery tops, their slender trunks wrapped in the shoots of other plants up to the very crown. At other times, freed from the overflowing sea of greenery, an entire grove emerges on a bare cliff and one can distinguish each separate tree, slender trunked and graceful, as if a group of young *kanaka* girls had just emerged from a swim and were drying their beautifully shaped bodies in the sun. As you see, I have resorted to really local colors. . . . On the right, while crossing rivers that cut across the road almost every five minutes, one could see the ocean with its surf and reefs. The water between the reef and the shore took on a variety of colors, from mother-of-pearl to turquoise, as if competing in beauty with the palm-decorated shore, the picturesque huts, the orange trees, and the general lushness of the tropical forest.

But now the road comes down to the ocean. The hills hang over it in a straight cliff, covered with hanging plants that are held close to the rocks by the narrow spurts of waterfalls gushing from above. Several huge spreading trees, called *vi* or *evi*<sup>34</sup> by the *kanakas*, were growing near the cliff, with their huge roots almost completely uncovered. Sometimes one can not reach to the top of the root spreading on the ground. The bark covering the trunk and the roots is gathered in folds and resembles the skin of a hippopotamus or a rhinoceros, and the roots are like the tails of huge fairytale dragons. Supported by these roots, the thick and tall trunk grows into a huge spreading tree. From the fruit of this *vi* the *kanakas* make a liquor. Three such trees standing next to a rocky cliff formed a rather extended space completely shutting out light, while several streams falling from above filled the area with coolness and even dampness. It was dark and almost cold in there. Farther on, the cliff hangs even closer over the sea, forming at its base a cave full of stagnant water. At first glance this cave looks fairly deep, but if one hurls a stone into it, the stone seems to fall not more than a yard away. Whether this is an optical illusion, or whether the inside of the cave is filled with condensed gas remained unsolved to us. The *kanakas* believe that the cave is inhabited by spirits, and not one of them will lend his boat to go and investigate the mysterious cave.

Still further on, the path runs along a corduroy road built on a sandy bar. Between the road and the cliff lies a lake reflecting a beautiful landscape—bushes, trees, several palms, and cliffs, which by now have lost their wild appearance and are adorned with foliage waving in the



breeze. The thick hanging green carpet was interrupted at the foot of the cliff, forming a kind of deep niche, which seemed to be awaiting the placement of a marble statue of some Venus of Milos, for whom this would have been a natural location.

The fog hanging over the mountains had been gathering into dark clouds for some time and finally burst into a downpour, warm but heavy. Drenched to the skin, we stopped to dry out and then continued on our way. It is not necessary to describe each hut and each small settlement that we passed. When I say "hut" you must visualize small houses woven of reeds just as skillfully as the small sewing baskets used by our ladies to carry their embroidery. Should you find such a basket in your garden left there by one of your cousins you would get an approximate idea of what a Tahitian hut looks like. It consists of bamboo poles placed vertically at about two finger-width intervals. This is surmounted by a roof of the same weave as the mats which cover the floor of the hut. The roof is good protection from sun and rain, while the slits between the bamboo poles let in fresh air. The surroundings of the hut are of infinite variety. If I put at your disposal some orange groves, a number of tall and graceful oleanders covered with bright flowers, and as many palm and banana trees as you wish, you can pick what you want and arrange a bouquet to your own taste around a basket, but you may rest assured that the huts and landscapes which we encountered along the road will still be prettier and more varied.

The rain came down in sporadic showers. Spurred by the rain to move faster, we passed the Papara district and stopped near some huts which belonged to the Papeuriri [Papeari?] district. A small river emptied into the sea; a split in the mountains, formed a deep lush ravine; three silvery streaks from waterfalls tumbled down from a dark cliff in the background and disappeared in a bluish mist. At a distance one could see a river with beautiful banks, while its nearest bend was concealed in a darkness of overgrown trees. A pirogue was moored in the bend of the river and several figures were splashing in the water, disturbing the sleepy calm of this picturesque silence. Toward the sea one could see several jutting promontories, each vying with the next in the beauty and luxury of its verdure.

We entered one of the huts. A corpse wrapped in white linen lay in one corner with several women sitting around it and singing hymns. We went into the next hut, where we rested, had some food, and started off again in our small cabriolet. But the farther we went, the worse the road became. Fords across rivers were almost impassable, and large rocks scattered on the shallow bottom exposed the thin wheels of our carriage

to great danger. Bridges consisted of a few logs placed across the rivers in such a way that one needed great skill to cross. Several times the wheels sank between the logs, and we had to get out and carry the cabriolet across by hand. Danny could have been helpful on these crossings, but he had become possessed by a passion to chase every pig or cow that peeked out of the dense forest. Whenever he was needed he was never in sight, as if on purpose. Only his panama hat would flash through the bushes, while a long-horned bull frightened by him would come flying at us, then stopping in fright would rush off into the bushes. One crossing over a bridge ended rather unpleasantly: we were forced to jump into the water and sank to our knees in mud. Having reached a settlement which reminded us of a French abbey with its peak-roofed church, a stone wall, and a pleasing landscape, we decided to turn back. The road was getting too difficult and we could have continued only on horseback. To spend the night we selected a large hut in Papeuriri which stood in the middle of a large yard that was open to the sea.

It was getting dark. Several girls and *kanakas* sat in the middle of the hut singing hymns. The attractive group was lit by oil burning in coconut shells. The hymns that one hears everywhere were brought here by Protestant missionaries. The *kanakas* had modified the tunes in their own manner, endowing them with their own original charm. The *kanaka* voices are pure and clear, but it would be difficult to define them. The choirs are well organized. On first hearing, the singing sounds strange, but as one keeps listening one begins to wish it would never stop. On this occasion, as usual, they sang the same verse all evening and well into the night. Taking a break of a minute or two, they would repeat it over again, and strange as it may seem, instead of becoming tired of it, each time we heard the verse it merely aroused our desire to hear it again, as if we were offered a sip at a time of a delicious drink of which the more you drink, the more you want. The missionaries had introduced this singing as a means of developing religious contemplation, or at least a religious mood, among the natives. The words of David they felt should somehow penetrate the souls of the singers, developing some spiritual elements. But how did this singing influence the *kanakas*? In every village, at night, young girls and young men gather in one of the larger huts to sing hymns. While the sound of the well organized choir resounds all over the palm groves, couples that have developed a liking for each other quietly leave the hut to enjoy even more the night and its charms somewhere in private among the *vi* tree roots or in the shade of an orange grove. The religious singing is frequently followed by a quiet, voluptuous Saturnalia as a natural expression of the *kanaka* carnal nature, stimulated

by the surrounding environment with its warm nights, aromas, stars, and the magic of its passionate and inflammatory breath.

The hut was full of people. The bizarre face of an albino stood out among the handsome faces of the *kanakas*. The Tahiti *kanakas* have retained to some extent their native dress—the *pareo* or *maro*, a piece of cloth wrapped around their legs instead of pants, with which they wear a shirt. The pattern on the *pareo* cloth is always large. The women wear long dresses, similar to the ones we saw in the Sandwich Islands, but since the French rule here the stupid design of these peignoirs reveals a few stylish innovations. The hostess of the hut was a very pretty woman, a widow named Vairaatoa. She did not sit among the singers, but busied herself around the table where a tea was being prepared for us. In the crowd surrounding the choir our attention was drawn to a figure about six feet tall, with the neck of the Farnese Hercules and a most good-natured expression on his face. In his arms he held a small boy about five years old. The child was completely lost in the enormous bulk of the man's arms and chest, and appeared to be a small human figure drawn for comparison against a bell tower. Several boys about ten or twelve years old, with beautiful curly hair and handsome faces, some sitting, some lying down, some standing, formed a picturesque group in their bright colored tapas.<sup>35</sup> They were all illuminated by the wavering light of the coconut lamp and some of them resembled the boys in a Murillo painting. Among the singers one girl stood out in her unique beauty. Her name was Tuane and she was the lead singer. She was very thin, like a cadaver. Even her face had an ashen hue, but her dark penetrating eyes, sharply designed mouth, and subtle charm forced one to look at her and listen to every word she sang.

The choir continued singing. I stretched out in the hammock that Danny had already strung up and, listening to the monotonous singing, examined closely the colorful group. Are they happy, and is happiness possible under such conditions? What else does a man need? Here he is surrounded by absolutely everything that nature can provide; why should one need wealth, the main cause of conflict and of all evil? Here, anyone who builds himself a large cabin is rich. One who does not wish to construct a large cabin can be content in a hut where he can catch the same breeze, where the same palms provide coconuts, and the same breadfruit tree contributes its fruit. The charm of the surroundings was so overwhelming that I was prepared to answer affirmatively, that indeed these conditions made happiness possible! It is true that at present it is upset by the interference of the Europeans, not to mention diseases, continual supervision, prohibition of everything that no *kanaka*

ever considered wrong; but even in their former way of life there were events pointing to their dissatisfaction with the conditions. People sought Power, abandoned their equable, quiet disposition, which alone makes happiness possible, and in a wild terrible passion performed atrocities, even cannibalism. During wars with enemy tribes—having become enemies at the command of their chiefs—the people would not settle down and return to their usual way of life until they destroyed the entire tribe of adversaries, until not a single woman or child was left alive. During these periods of animal passions smoke rose from human sacrifices and people ate the flesh of their victims. It would be curious to know whether later, when reason prevailed again, repentance or some other similar feeling disturbed the minds and troubled the consciences of the savages. The formation of the Arioi society, in which one of the chief requirements was infanticide, points to either extreme abandonment of humanity or to some vague attempt to escape from their existing conditions by seeking a way out through a desperate action—a situation in which a society can find itself after many disappointments and fruitless attempts at renascence!

But despite the dark side to the *kanaka* native character, there are few nations that demonstrate such gentle traits as are characteristic of this people. They were not deceiving Bougainville or Cook by their kindness, their hospitality, modesty, cleanliness of their dwellings, and gentleness. They are, in fact, like that and to this day remain the same in spite of accusations heaped upon them by the missionaries. One must not view an inhabitant of Tahiti through the eyes of a Catholic monk who throughout his life has not seen anything but cassock clad men and bigotry within the damp walls of the monastery; who has been exposed only to the scholasticism preached by people like himself, and whose strongest feelings may have been aroused only by whipping. The *kanaka* was born under palm trees, and his first impressions must have made him feel close to nature; not a single disharmony faced him, not a single false or disquieting sound was heard. He listened to the sound of the surf breaking over the reef and the murmur of the palms; there was no cause for worry because life was so easy and everything around him was so beautiful. Why should he hold back from intimacy with a beautiful girl for fear that the next step would be immoral? And he took the flower of her love with the same feeling with which he plucked a coconut from his palm tree. One cannot call this depravity just as one cannot accuse a *kanaka* of being lazy just because he reposes under a tree and contemplates the sky. The same was true during primordial times. He is at peace, he is happy, and this is all he wants of life. Pepin<sup>36</sup> accuses

them of uncleanness, especially in recent times, but on the basis of what we observed I cannot possibly agree. How could it develop? No *kanaka* man or woman would think of giving up their bathing for anything in the world, since that is one of their great pleasures. At every step one comes across dark-eyed naiads splashing in the water and swinging from vines over the water, like mermaids. And in their huts one always finds several clean woven mats on which one can stretch out and dine without hesitation. As for the diseases acquired from the Europeans, is that their fault?

Soon my reflections gave way to the charm of all that I had seen. Scenes encountered in the course of the day unfolded in my imagination in all their beauty. The magic shades of the vegetation and the sea, the fantastic shapes of these paradise-like shores, the darkness of the tropical forest, the sound of the water falling from a cliff—all this filled my soul and intermingled with the sound of the choir which was repeating for the hundredth time its harmonious tune, and somehow made me feel better and better! The giant *kanaka* settled down next to me and was gently swaying the hammock. Other images arose before me: early childhood, a lullaby, close friendships, comforting words, the first feverish heart throb. The choir's singing sounded as if far away, now coming closer, then disappearing, then again sounding somewhere far away, its regular, harmonious cords barely reaching me. I fell asleep.

I was awakened to have some tea. Curious children were examining our belongings. Grown-ups soon joined them and a lively conversation with the help of gestures rose between us. A venerable old man of about eighty, although looking very fit, entered the hut. In a quiet but trembling voice he began to read a prayer. Everyone quieted down, and even Danny made a sign with his hand for me to keep quiet when I turned my eyes to him to ask who the man was. Having finished his prayer, the old man approached us, shook hands and left. After that the singing started up again and continued far into the night. People began to settle down for the night in different corners of the hut. Lamps were extinguished one by one and just one small light was visible in the corner, where the hostess was busy removing things from her trunk and then repacking it. The choir was still singing, but even it became smaller. Only three female singers remained finally. This time we chose beds rather than the floor and soon were fast asleep. Our last impression was the sound of the hymn.

Almost the entire following day we spent in the hut—so reluctant were we to leave. Our light chestnut horse was harnessed only after dinner, and Danny started off prancing ahead of us and chasing the cows

like the day before. We were returning along the already familiar road through the forest which our horse recognized and carried us with amazing liveliness. Suddenly he stopped in front of a fallen tree lying across the road and this was sufficient reason for us to leave the cabriolet and look around. The tree was thick and huge. It must have been cut down the day before and left where it fell. The Papara village huts could be seen on both sides of the road. We had passed by the village the day before but did not see anything because of the rain. The Papara is rained on every day and for that reason is considered one of the richest districts of the island. Even Pepin makes an allowance in favor of its inhabitants, discovering in them some of the prowess of their fathers and forefathers. A missionary lives in this village and there is a school. Giant *vi* trees with their dragon-like roots were growing on the edge of the road. I sat down in the shade of one of them and soon the entire village gathered around us settling in between and on the roots of the giant. The crowd was amazingly picturesque, each beautiful head decorated with flowers and leaves; some figures were draped in multicolored tapas [pareos], taking on one of those graceful poses natural only to a person living amidst beautiful surroundings.

We took a walk into the ravine where we were drenched by rain as though to confirm the fact that the Papara district is frequently rained on, even though it had not rained in the village. In the evening a lemon was needed for the tea. Our *kanaka* host lit a torch and went into the woods. We could see the flickering flame lighting the darkness among the dense trees and soon he returned with the lemon.

The following morning we went to visit the school. The small, broken down structure of semi-European construction contained some thirty children and a few adults. Almost all of them were smoking cigars, which the *kanakas* make out of the local tobacco. They pick a leaf which they dry over fire, twist it, and wrap it in a leaf of fine straw to smoke. Three boys and two girls were on their knees, but in spite of their sad condition were exchanging glances and occasional smiles on the sly. Among those who remained unpunished one could hear laughter, their dark eyes darted all around, there were sounds of whispering, and occasionally the sound of blows distributed at random. A tall *kanaka*, apparently the arm of the law, walked up and down the classroom. But suddenly a figure dressed in a black cassock appeared and everything quieted down. The cassock clad figure held a corkscrew in his hands—could it be a substitute for a pointer, I wondered. . . . This gentleman had a narrow forehead, his black eyebrows were joined—a sure sign of stubbornness; his black eyes had absolutely no expression, while his black teeth, between fleshy



cheeks and lips, matched his narrow forehead. Wishing to start a conversation that would suit this gentleman, I asked him whether there were still many non-baptized people in Tahiti. He sounded hurt: "That is not our business," he replied; "here we are mostly concerned with Protestants." I looked startled not understanding his answer. The lesson began. At first the children were made to recite in chorus in their native tongue the boundaries of France. "A présent en français!" commanded the missionary waving his corkscrew, and the children responded in a chorus: "La France est bornée par La Manche, la Belgique" and so forth. "You do teach them French?" I inquired again. "No, in general we have very little to do with schooling; this is not our primary duty" was the answer. We glanced at his corkscrew and hastened to leave. This one is certainly not an innovator, I thought to myself.

On our way back to Papeete we felt as if we were examining the rest of a gorgeous album of landscape pictures. We feasted our eyes on it, turned the drawings over from first to last and again from the last to the frontispiece. Approaching the town, we decided to walk leading the tired horse by the bridle. The palm grove which is visible from the harbor, came into view. Then we saw some of our fellow officers taking an outing on horseback, having managed to escape the various ship drills, such as raising and lowering armed launches, yards, and top-gallants.

Of course, we were plied with questions: did we get to Fataua, did we see the lake which is in the mountains at 3000 feet elevation, and so on. We had to admit shamefacedly that we had not seen any of it, but had just walked around and spent most of the time lying around in various huts. While getting to the lake at high elevation presented many difficulties, the stories about Fataua were tempting. We decided to go to Fataua, an excursion which occupied the entire following day.

In a spot where only an eagle would nest, the *kanakas* had built a small fortification; however, the French took it from them. It is rumored that soldiers had ascended the cliffs above it and then descended like falling snow upon the *kanakas* who had never suspected such a maneuver. This French exploit became quite understandable to us when we saw a *kanaka* with a French Legion of Honor decoration "for services rendered." The services were just that—he had sold the main strategic defense point of his country, their Gibraltar.

On the way we stopped to see one of the plantation owners, an Englishman who had been living here for the past thirty years. His sugar cane plantation is the largest on the island, and he has spent considerable capital in developing it. We visited the planter for another reason: to

have a swim in his garden, where a river temptingly gurgled and foamed in cascades over huge rocks. Before swimming we spent some time in his house. Our host, a venerable and neat looking man, whose facial features resembled those of George Washington, related to use in a quiet and even voice the story of his settling in Tahiti.

After our swim we continued on our way. At our feet we had the river meandering between its beautiful shores. Beyond the river rose a mountain ridge gradually increasing in height, while the opposite side also became higher forming with the first a picturesque canyon. The forest, filled at first with the ubiquitous guavas, gradually became thick with *vi* trees, acacias, orange, and hundreds of other trees—rosewood, ironwood—forming in their multitude an unevenly shaped dark canopy. The road, freed for a while from the trees that had been crowding it, hung over a precipice, and a forest clad mountain rose up before us like a huge stage set. Instead of bringing the mass together into a continuous green carpet, the clear transparent atmosphere outlined each little tree, set off each branch no matter how high above us. Here and there the rounded leafy hills were dotted with palm trees, standing out like small signs; at another spot, a projecting cliff would hold one single huge spreading tree. Then the road would again enter the forest and emerge shortly so as not to tire the traveler with the dark shade of the trees. Suddenly we had to cross the river. The bridge was broken down and only some parts were still standing. The rapid water was destroying the rest of it and scattering spray over rocks and the tree-covered banks. We had to wade across. The horses kept resisting, often stopped dead, confused by the current and stumbling over the rocks; but overcoming all these obstacles they briskly brought us out to the opposite shore where we had to bend down to the pommel so as not to hit our heads against an archway of tree branches through which we passed as if entering a gateway. The road began to wind up the mountain in zigzags. The forest alternated with fields, high mountains, hills, and scattered groves. Occasionally through its translucent net one could spot a ravine covered with greenery; sometimes a single tree trunk would be covered with a tangled mass of ten or more other trunks and vines, and it was impossible to determine which leaf belonged to which trunk. And what a variety of picturesque spots, colorful little nooks! In one place several venerable trees with gnarled trunks stood close together in a clump, as if gathered for a consultation, and spread their huge branches over other trees joined to them by lianas and other creepers. Suddenly a sheer cliff rose before us. Looking up one felt as if one was at the bottom of a stone-lined well, while above the cliff, which was marked by horizontal and vertical cracks,

trees hung down their curly foliage, appearing at a distance like microscopic dots of many hues. As we continued the road hung over a precipice. Before us a stage setting of mountains, cliffs, and trees crowded around a huge basin into which rushed the silvery streak of a cascade. It sprang from a green canyon, which ended abruptly at a vertical rocky precipice. The trees and vegetation followed the river from its very inception down to its last precipitous rush over the cliff and even hung over it as if watching with fear its sudden fall. The spot where the cascade fell was not visible to us. At first the continuous glass-like stream subdivided into elongated rings, and the sun's rays breaking through the brilliant splashes formed a circle of rainbow hues through which the water rushed down, disappearing in the dark blue abyss. Each of the mountains crowding around the basin vied with the others in the beauty of its apparel. One had decorated itself with boulders, placing them like precious stones into the emerald setting of greenery; another one wrapped itself in an impenetrable green cloak; a third had thrown this cloak off its shoulders, displaying its shining rocky body; another would be frowning at one moment, darkened by the shadow of clouds clinging to its top, or would be beaming all over, enveloped in bright sunshine. Close to the road, against the blue background of the deep ravine, one was struck by the clearly defined roots of a tree hanging over it and the bright green hues of banana leaves and other bushes. One could see two more turns in the rocky road clinging to the steep mountain side, and finally, we saw Fataua, the nest built over the precipice, a small fortification with a small house and barracks. Soldiers are posted here at all times, supplied with provisions once a month. Anyone in control of this point controls the island.

How to describe this day which we spent in the mountains—our descending to the river, swimming in its pools down to where the river dug through two gloomy caves with stone arches, and rushed over a precipice; our being fed some grass in the guise of a salad; my falling asleep in one of the caves to the sound of dripping water; and our general well being, far from people, high above them and their towns? . . .

Here Faust would have found, it seems to me, those "breasts of Nature" he pined for.<sup>37</sup>

In the town we were assigned a guide, a prisoner from New Caledonia. The holes in his pierced ears were large enough to pass a thick cane through. His face, sporting a beard and mustache, with protruding lips, was dignified and serious. However, in spite of his dignity we loaded our supplies on his shoulders, and he never fell behind our horses, walking in a quick steady pace. When after swimming we settled down in the

sergeant's house to have lunch, he came in too. "Ah, old pal", exclaimed one of the Frenchmen who was present, "How are you getting on, my friend? If we succeed in capturing your son any time soon, we will feel much safer in New Caledonia! Do you know who this is?" he continued, turning to us "This is the 'king' of New Caledonia! He has given us a lot of trouble. Just a short while ago he ate up two Frenchmen. Finally, we caught him and brought him here. Now his son is in charge, but he is more agile and it won't be so simple to handle him."

Will wonders never cease? Like a fairy tale! People eaten up, the transformation of a guide into a king, and right here in this country, which is itself full of wonders not imagined even in *Thousand and One Nights* or in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. . . . No fairy tale is set in such fanciful colors as this magic land displays in real life! Fantasy would have peopled its caves with goddesses and fairies. Such inventions are needed when the picture is somehow incomplete, but here beauty is so prevalent and so complete that even if a fairy should appear suddenly, no one would be surprised.

That evening we were invited to a ball given for our Squadron. The Hôtel de Ville, where the ball was held, stood in the center of a spacious yard approached through a lane of tamarind trees. There was a fountain in front of the building and the entrance was decorated with flags and lampions. The entire yard was filled with people. In the lane *kanaka* musicians, playing thick bamboo pipes, stood in a double row. We had encountered them that morning on our way to Fataua. They were riding excellent horses, and both the horses and the riders were bedecked with flowers and some sort of yellow leaves. There were many *kanaka* women in the crowd, who tried to get a better view of the events by climbing up into the trees and, illuminated from below, settled among the branches in varied poses.

The hall contained an odd mixture of the European inhabitants of Tahiti. Pale ugly people bumped into each other while performing polkas and waltzes to the sound of a piano, and of an accordion of the very same type so often heard in our streets at home. In a pink loose fitting gown, her thick head sunk into her thick fat body, and waving a red fan, sat Queen Pomare. Close by, like monumental figures, sat her aunt and two "chiefesses". Such women could be exhibited as curiosities at country fairs. Try to picture her aunt, a women of seventy, about six feet tall, with proportionally broad shoulders and huge bosom—a woman standing up straight with her head somewhat thrown back and a white feather waving in her white hair! Her face still showed signs of a first class beauty. Both chiefesses were of the same breed, and the puny

French men and women dancing around the colossal figures resembled goats lost in a herd of Holstein cows. Foremost among the outstanding personalities at the ball was the Governor, Commissaire Imperial, Mr. de R.<sup>38</sup> He is the very image of Napoleon I: the same face, the same pose, except that unlike the well-known stereotype he has a toad-like expression and conveys the same feeling one gets when touching that creature. His wife, a blond lady, is reputed to be the first beauty in Tahiti and is also Queen of the Ball. Looking at her I recalled a comparison made by Heine in one of his works and thought it most applicable here. If Queen Pomare is a descendant of one of the fat biblical kine that Pharaoh dreamed about, then Mme. R. must stem from the lean ones.<sup>39</sup> What perverted taste one must have to admire in Tahiti such lifeless, skinny, blond beauty! . . . And now we see a veritable antique—one of the first settlers in Tahiti. She is a venerable old lady wearing an equally ancient bonnet which she probably wore at her wedding before coming here. If it were possible, I would like to kiss the hand of this venerable lady. She was one of the first European women who dared abandon the routine of her compatriots, and probably was happier than they were. Then, there is the King husband of Pomare, a personality whose physique resembles our Minin.<sup>40</sup> A person of medium height probably could not reach up to his shoulder with an outstretched arm, and above his shoulders is a lazy not very intelligent looking head with a hawk-like nose and low forehead. He is wearing a general's uniform, is suffering from the heat, and quite obviously cannot wait until he will be able to throw it off and don his habitual costume of *pareo* and shirt. He is accompanied by his son, a *kanaka* Mitrofan,<sup>41</sup> looking like a wilding. He also has been dressed up in some sort of uniform and is being taken around the rooms filled with touch-me-not Europeans, whereas he would prefer to be in the woods, climbing trees, swimming in the river. . . .

Two young women in white dresses and with flower wreaths in their hair were sitting on the balcony. Both were *kanakas*. Being daughters of one of the chiefs, Tairiiri, they may attend the ball, but how to participate in the dancing, mix with whites? And will any of the Frenchmen have the courage to invite one of them? And yet they would so much like to do it! K., who is most tactful, understands the difficult situation and, like Julius Caesar, always ready to cross the Rubicon, almost by force persuades first one and then the other to join him on the floor; and thus he breaks the ice. From then on they danced almost as much as the others, surpassing them with their beauty and the pleasure visible on their young faces. I rejoiced watching them and not without satisfaction guessed at the meaning of the acid smile on the lips

of the fading palefaced stars. The ball was rather dull, but in contrast the yard, full of invited and uninvited guests, was bubbling with life. The *kanaka* musicians were playing, with short breaks, the same tunes over and over on their pipes. Frequently, when the sound of music would start, several *kanaka* girls bedecked in flowers like Bacchantes would dart out of the crowd and start dancing. Their dance resembled both a polka and the *hupa-hupa* (which is the Tahitian name for the hula-hula). There was merriment and laughter, eyes sparkled like live coals, and more than one young man abandoned the ballroom to join this crowd, which was permeated with something special, enchanting, and voluptuous.

The sound of a drum was heard in one corner of the yard where a small crowd was gathered in a circle. I made my way there, but soon returned to fetch some of my friends. I felt I had no right to enjoy selfishly what I had discovered. Many uninvited admirers of such entertainment had gathered there to watch the *hupa-hupa* which was going full swing to the sound of the drum and clapping of the spectators.

The night was lovely, the pale patches of the milky way and the bright stars gave a variety of shades to the southern sky. The Southern Cross stood over a palm tree, and the air was warm without being stifling, while the fragrance of flowers spread from the crowd. Several young girls would come out to the center of the circle, sit down, assume the same poses and make the same motions, while a *kanaka* bayadere would dance ecstatically to the same beat. Soon another dancer would replace her and the ecstasy reached the final limit, their gestures reaching unimaginable speed and voluptuousness. The men in the last rows would climb onto the shoulders of those in front of them at the height of the dance. It seemed there was no limit to the general excitement and pleasure! The Sandwich Island hula-hula is much calmer and more reserved.

The courtyard of the Queen's residence was next to the yard surrounding the Hôtel de Ville and one could enter it through a small gate. The Queen's palace is a large dwelling, built of wood, but with a high rush roof. A spacious room contained European furniture, two mirrors, pictures, and a portrait of Pomare done in oils. Hearing the sound of singing in the palace courtyard we went there. The palace was lit by a single candle, and the balcony was full of people awaiting the arrival of their "landlady."<sup>42</sup> They constituted a sort of palace staff. Any *kanaka* man or woman who has no place to go and is absolutely unwilling to do any work joins the Queen, and she permits them to remain attached to the court. *Kanakas* lay in groups on the mats spread over the green lawn



in front of the balcony. The ones sitting on the balcony steps and on the terrace were singing hymns. The best male and female singers gather here and sing long past midnight, until their revered ruler, suffering from the heat and excessive fat, falls asleep to the monotonous rhythm of their hymns; how pleasant it is to fall asleep to that sound I know from my own experience.

At the end of each day we spent the evening far out of town. When we became tired, we would enter the first dwelling we encountered. Each time we would be welcomed by a picturesque family, who would gladly spread a mat. One of the men would climb a palm tree to cut down a coconut, which he would offer to us after skillfully knocking off the top so that we could gulp down the slightly sourish refreshing liquid. Children would be playing nearby. A young woman sitting on the door stoop has let down her thick black hair and is combing it out with great difficulty. One can spend a long time in such a hut without a disturbing thought just watching the waving palm fronds and listening to their constant murmur. But one could not remain lying down forever. We would continue on our way, and would plunge into a grove of breadfruit trees. Crossing a bridge we would be tempted by a fresh stream falling from a small babbling cascade. Without hesitation, we would throw off our light clothing and jump into the water; not far off a few women would be bathing in the shade of huge trees. But soon it turns dark and night falls. The air becomes even more pleasant, somehow purer. Far past midnight we would sit in some quiet spot while a grove of palms would whisper their "mysterious saga",<sup>43</sup> and the sky, sparkling with its countless stars, would be most eloquently watching us through the breadfruit leaves and the coconuts. Occasionally a familiar tune of a hymn would be heard, and we would strain our ears to catch the barely audible sound. . . .

We spent the last night before our departure in the Queen's courtyard, where there was a feast. The guests were served food in a large tent, while choirs of male and female singers were scattered throughout the yard surrounded by the inevitable *kanaka* public who always seek out and enjoy any entertainment.

Not being invited to the feast, we were satisfied to settle down among the Queen's domestics behind the singers. Soon the dinner was over and the stylish European costumes and crinolines, so out of place here, disappeared. The Queen retired, and changed her uncomfortable and confining outfit for *kanaka* clothing and sat down on the balcony. Her husband also donned a *tapa*, and life took on its normal familiar course. Spotting us in the yard, the Queen invited us to the palace. I sat down

next to the Queen and began telling her things that I thought would please her. "You reign over the most beautiful kingdom in the world," I said. "Mmu", she replied, benevolently nodding her huge head and continuing to fan herself against the heat. "No other country will leave us with such wonderful memories as Tahiti!" "Mmu", she mused again. "Tahiti is paradise on earth. . . ." "Mmu". I cast a respectful glance at the esteemed "landlady" and withdrew. She is about fifty years old, and is greatly beloved by the *kanakas*, to many of whom she offers assistance. If paternalistic rule could evoke tender emotion, it certainly would here.

A discreetly passionate saturnalia was taking place in the yard without drunkenness or orgies; Pomare, knowing her people, was watching them from her balcony and was happy. Throughout the yard, the *kanakas* were sitting or lying down in small groups under the palm trees. When one choir stopped, another began its delightful and lulling songs. The clear voices resounded like silver in the air. The sky spread a golden covering over us. It was so still that the flame of candles burning in the open never flickered. What discreet conversations, what voluptuous whispers were concealed in this charmed stillness! . . . Frequently individual pairs left the gathering and disappeared in some remote corner of the spacious courtyard.

We returned to the clipper at two o'clock and early that morning weighed anchor, not suspecting that we were due for a pleasant surprise. In a few hours we dropped anchor in the harbor of Pepetuoï on Eimeo island, one of the most beautiful harbors in the world.

The Eimeo islet lies twelve miles from Tahiti. I have already mentioned its importance to the early missionaries. And even now it contains several schools and churches scattered around, as well as cotton spinning mills.

Seldom have I seen more unusual shapes of mountains and heights than the ones on Eimeo. One feels that one is approaching some fairyland inhabited by fairyland giants. Some cliffs stretch upward like the Strasbourg Cathedral or gingerbread towers, others take on the shape of cupolas or bell towers; some other cliffs rise up like high walls. Facing the sea all these enormous cliffs are covered by an impenetrable cloak of greenery descending to the water in a colorful and variegated garland as beautiful as any in Tahiti. The harbor is deep and could be mistaken for a wide river flowing into the sea. A river actually does fall into its depth, first flowing through the plains bordered by the cliffs which give the entire island such a diversified appearance. On both sides of the harbor are mountains and cliffs with their smooth and decorative

greenery which ascends almost to the top and descends to the water in thick bushy waves. The forest is very much the same as on Tahiti. There are a few scattered huts along the paths leading to the sea. The trunks and crowns of the palm trees make the groves stand out among the dark leaves of orange trees. There are the same giant *vi* with their fantastic roots, the same guavas, ironwood, and rosewood trees, and a thousand other types with their intermingled branches and leaves. At the shore line the deep harbor ends in shallows covered with tree-like coral.

We spent two days in Eimeo, walking through its woods and picturesque harbors, spending every evening far into the night sitting on the grass, viewing the palm groves, the mountains, and the splendid bay. How can one convey the charm of these nights with the clear air and sky? All one can say is that it gave us a feeling of well-being.

*Kanakas* would gather around us, singing and playing their pipes. We also did some singing, while our younger men organized games. The Tahitian Minister of the Navy, who came here along with the King and the Minister of Foreign Affairs on one of our corvettes, was so tempted by the game of leap-frog that he could not resist and joined in jumping and stooping down to be jumped over by the others. "To complete the fun one should have a chance to jump over the King," remarked someone; but the King did not join the game.

Supper and tea were brought ashore and there were fireworks. The rockets flew almost as high as the mountains. The blue flame of the flares illuminated the luxuriant palm trees giving the night an unreal aspect.

Our clipper was to take the King and his Ministers back to Papeete and then join the rest of the ships at sea to continue on our way. The crossing should have taken only a few hours but lasted a whole day. Even the clipper, it seemed, did not want to leave these blessed shores. The engines broke down, the screw whip somehow got out of shape and would not fit where it was supposed to go, and then we hit a dead calm. In a word, everything went wrong. It seemed that each cable expressed its reluctance to depart from this charmed circle as though it felt the attraction and realized that there was something new under the sun. . . . As one might expect, a strong reaction had to take place as reason asserted itself. Seldom have I witnessed such bustling, commotion, and shouting, as during this crossing. The King and the Minister of the Navy watched all this activity in astonishment while keeping close to the launch. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, who obviously knew nothing of navy regulations, climbed atop the anchor deck and assumed positions that would be quite appropriate somewhere among the branches in the forest, but certainly not by the mizzen-mast. Seeing the officers rushing around

and looking cross, the Tahitians showed great respect, tried to catch their eye, and occasionally caught their caps when blown onto the deck. Toward evening we again sighted Tahiti.

The sun was setting and its last rays, as the saying goes, lit up the green foliage fresh from the recent rain. The beautiful leafy border surrounding the roadstead glistened and the hills were shimmering, while all the crevices and cliffs of the mountains were in the shade. In half an hour we began to weigh anchor. . . . Farewell Tahiti! . . . It grew dark. Slowly we left the roadstead, where we had spent without doubt the most pleasant days of our voyage, perhaps the best moments of our lives. Close contact with nature had revived all of us, as if plunging us into fresh spring water. Here we had discovered, or at any rate witnessed, the possibility of happiness, the possibility of delight and enthusiasm at a stage when we thought we had already reached the time for memories and quiet contemplation. In Tahiti we were young again, and many a heartstring was plucked, awaking the sound which makes one understand Romeo and Juliet. Our Juliet was nature addressing us "with many hearts and watching us with many eyes. We followed her blindly and she pressed us to her heart like beloved children. She led us into life and will lead us out. We trust her, let her do with us whatever she wishes; she will not hate her own creation!" (Goethe)<sup>44</sup>

A small boat with a lantern waited at the reef exit. We navigated between the submerged rocks with great difficulty. Harmonious singing was heard from the shore, but nothing was visible anymore except for a dark and somber hill and a few scattered lights.

Again we started rocking on the waves.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Giliaks, usually called Nivkhi today, are the aborigines of the Amur area in Siberia.

<sup>2</sup> The ships have returned

To the beloved native land.

(Johann Friedrich von Schiller, 1759–1865)

<sup>3</sup> Like many other writers of the 19th century, the author used the term *kanaka* to mean "native". In Russian, however, he used *kanak*, with a masculine ending, for men and added a feminine ending, making it *kanachka* when referring to women.

<sup>4</sup> Finland was part of Russia at that time.

<sup>5</sup> Later in the narrative it becomes clear that the man is German, hence the need to recite in German the incantation from the Russian folk tale *Sivka-Burka*, the magic chestnut-gray horse which would appear when evoked and would perform magical feats.

<sup>6</sup> Apparently a tag of verse, but not identified by the author.

<sup>7</sup> Probably the old Court House, still standing today.

- <sup>8</sup> A mountain in the Crimea.
- <sup>9</sup> The "shawl" probably refers to the *pā-ū*, a wrap around skirt, worn especially by women on horseback.
- <sup>10</sup> William Whiston (1667–1752), English clergyman and mathematician. He popularized the view that the faith of early Christians was Arian, in his work *Primitive Christianity Revived* (1711–12).
- <sup>11</sup> Sir William Penn (1621–1670), the father of the founder of Pennsylvania.
- <sup>12</sup> Wilhelm Freiherr von Humboldt (1767–1839), brother of Alexander von Humboldt, the naturalist and traveler. He was author of a treatise on the Kavi, the ancient language of Java, published posthumously in 1836–40. Johann Karl Eduard Buchman (1667–1752)
- <sup>13</sup> The quotation in the author's footnotes is a summary of pp. 506–507 in *A Narrative of the Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* by John Williams of the London Missionary Society, published by J. Snow, London, 1838.
- <sup>14</sup> Queen Emma, wife of Kamehameha IV, was part white not through her grandmother but through her grandfather, the famous John Young.
- <sup>15</sup> This was the funeral of John William Pitt Kinau, son of Princess Ruth Keelikolani and Leleiohoku, who died in September 1859.
- <sup>16</sup> Reference is to the German doctor, Georg Sheffer, an employee of the Russian American Company, who attempted to establish a Russian colony on Kauai in 1815. He was driven out by Kamehameha I and did not "escape on a ship captured in Kamchatka", but departed on an American ship.
- <sup>17</sup> This was probably John William Maikai, Captain of the King's Guards.
- <sup>18</sup> The author was apparently mistaken. There was no Princess Charlotte in the Hawaiian Royalty and the mother of the deceased was Princess Ruth Keelikolani. Perhaps this last name was somehow transposed into "Charlotte".
- <sup>19</sup> In 1859 the Royal Mausoleum was still located on the old Palace grounds. Today the place is marked by a green mound on the Palace grounds.
- <sup>20</sup> Prince William Lunalilo, who was to become King Lunalilo upon the death of Kamehameha V. He was notorious for his outrageous behavior and heavy drinking.
- <sup>21</sup> The author's information was incorrect. John Young was not brought here by Vancouver. He was a British sailor on the American brig *Eleanora* and was detained by the Hawaiians while ashore in 1790; Vancouver came to the Islands in 1792.
- <sup>22</sup> This story appears apocryphal and might be an invention of Prince William. Kamehameha III had twin children who died in infancy. His wife, Kalama, mother of the children, was of lowly origin, but she was not part white.
- <sup>23</sup> The King's secretary was Henry A. Neilson and the incident took place at Lahaina on Maui where the King's jealousy was aroused by malicious gossip. Queen Emma was part English rather than American.
- <sup>24</sup> The Minister of Finance from 1858 to 1862 was David L. Gregg.
- <sup>25</sup> Russian Christmas occurred on January 6th under the old Julian calendar, which was twelve days later than the Gregorian calendar used in the West.
- <sup>26</sup> The author confused the name of Moanalua Valley with the mountain Mauna Loa of the island of Hawaii.
- <sup>27</sup> It seems the author was misinformed on the time it takes to roast a pig in an *imu* which usually takes many hours.
- <sup>28</sup> Presumably the German consular agent mentioned earlier.
- <sup>29</sup> The portrait of Kamehameha I by John Gay Sawkins now hangs in Iolani Palace.
- <sup>30</sup> Captain Bligh's boat landed at Timor, not Sydney.

- <sup>31</sup> Only Oro was wrapped in tapa.
- <sup>32</sup> The Arioi was an ancient secret religious society whose members had been forbidden to have children and practiced infanticide. The implication here is that stifling natural instincts in children is akin to infanticide.
- <sup>33</sup> *Fei* — mountain plantain.
- <sup>34</sup> *Vi* — native Tahitian mango.
- <sup>35</sup> Tapa was not bright or multicolored. The author uses the term here and elsewhere probably in error instead of *pareo*.
- <sup>36</sup> Benjamin Pepin, a Catholic missionary. Died 1852.
- <sup>37</sup> Reference to Goethe's *Faust*, Part I, Scene I.  
 Thee, boundless Nature, how make thee my own?  
 Where you, ye breasts? Founts of all Being, shining?  
 Whereon hang Heaven's and Earth's desire,  
 Whereto our withered hearts aspire, —  
 Ye flow, ye feed: and am I vainly pining?  
 (Bayard Taylor translation, Oxford University Press, 1932)
- <sup>38</sup> Eugène Gautier de la Richerie.
- <sup>39</sup> Heinrich Heine, German poet and satirist (1791-1856). The reference is to the following quotation from *On Leaving Göttingen*, (in *Works of Prose*, edited by Herman Kesten, new translation by E. B. Ashton [New York: L. B. Fischer, 1943], p. 40). "... I noticed in the tavern a gentleman and two ladies about to depart. ... One of the ladies was his wife: a rather large, far-flung lady; she had a red square mile of a face, dimples in her cheeks not unlike spittoons for cupids, a fleshy drooping double chin that seemed a bad sequel to the face, and a high-piled bosom circumvallated with stiff lace-point. ... The other lady was her sister-in-law and exact opposite. If the first was descended from the fat kine of Pharaoh, this one stemmed from the lean. Her face was a mouth between two ears, and her breast as disconsolate and dreary as the Lüneburg heath. ..."
- The biblical Pharaoh's dream, of course, is from Genesis, 41:2.
- <sup>40</sup> Minin is a Russian national hero who in 1611 saved Moscow from Polish invasion. He was renowned for his great physique, and a monument to him, erected in 1818, still stands in Red Square in Moscow today.
- <sup>41</sup> Mitrofan was the name of a young simpleton who was the darling of his parents in the classic 18th-Century Russian satire *Nedorosel'* (The Hobbledehoy) by Ivan Denisovich Fonvizin (1744-1792). The play was very popular and Mitrofan became a standard nickname, used to this day, in reference to any overgrown, simpleminded mother's pet.
- <sup>42</sup> The English term "landlady" does not quite convey the meaning of the Russian "pomeshchitza", used by the author. It refers to the benevolent resident owner of an estate, surrounded and entertained by her staff and servants, as described in the idyllic *Old-Fashioned Landowners* by Gogol (1809-1852).
- <sup>43</sup> The quotation is from a popular poem by the Romantic poet Michael Lermontov (1814-1841), *When the Yellowing Cornfield Sways*:  
 When the yellowing cornfield sways, and the cool forest rustles to the sound of the breeze, and in the garden the crimson plum hides beneath the green leaf's luscious shade;  
 when on a rose-coloured evening or in the golden hour of morning the silvery lily of the valley, sprinkled with a fragrant dew, nods its head to me in friendly greeting from underneath a bush;



when the cold spring dances down the glen, and, lulling thought into an uncertain dream, murmurs to me a *mysterious saga* of the peaceful land from which it speeds;

then my soul's anxiety is stilled, the furrows on my brow are smoothed, I am able to comprehend happiness on earth, and in heaven I see God.

The prose translation is by Dimitri Obolensky in *The Penguin Book of Russian Verse*, 1962. It conveys the feeling of the poem better than any of the extant rhymed translations.

- <sup>44</sup> The author does not supply any references and I have not been able to locate this quotation from Goethe.